

Hafa Adai!

Seven former IPI workers seek \$11.58M in damages. PAGE 2
Aug. 17 deadline to apply for long-term resident status. PAGE 5

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Returning resident tests positive

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

A returning resident that just came from the U.S. mainland who arrived last June 27 tested positive for COVID-19 last July 3, bringing the CNMI's

total cases to 31. This could mean that there will be more changes to testing protocols for inbound passengers.

See TESTS on Page 4

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, July 5, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	280	8	288
Recovered	179	0	179
Active	96	8	104
Deaths	6*	0	6*
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested	14,053		

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	30	1	31
Active	0	1	1
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested	8,217**		

*Total includes a sailor from the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

**Total includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor



LIBERATION DAY MOTOCADE

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Saipan still managed to push through with its 74th Liberation Day commemoration with its first community motorcade last Saturday, July 4, from Marpi all the way to the Airport Field, where a virtual Liberation Day celebration was held and broadcasted online. Tinian also held its own separate motorcade and virtual commemoration.

KRIZEL TUAZON

Tony Roma's, Capricciosa to close this month

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT

After 25 years in the CNMI, current challenges proved too much for international brands and local icons Tony Roma's and Capricciosa. Their mother company, Triple J, announced Friday the closure of the two restaurants this month.

According Triple J chair and
See TONY on Page 4

File photos shows the Tony Roma's Restaurant and Capricciosa at the Comete Center in Garapan.

KRIZEL TUAZON



UNTIL ANALYSES COMPLETED

Firm opposes plan to also rebury bones dug up before IPI's project

» Findings on ancestral remains indicate high rate of child mortality may have been due to contagious diseases

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A company that is being of-

Budget hearing starts; proposed budget at \$70M net

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives

ferred to oversee this month's reburial of hundreds of ancestral remains that were dug up at the site of Imperial Pacific

Ways and Means Committee will begin its series of budget hearings for fiscal year 2021 today, beginning with the

Resort in Garapan does not want included in the reburial the 260 ancestral bones that

See FIRM on Page 4

CNMI Public School System at 10am, and the Northern Marianas College at 2pm.

See BUDGET on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Premier Hotel Group has opened much anticipated The Tsubaki Tower in Guam.

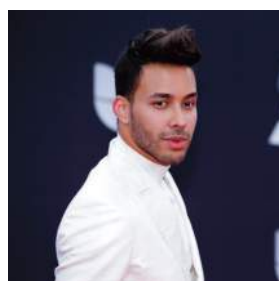
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NATION

President Donald Trump vowed to "safeguard our values" from enemies within.

PAGE 12



LIFE & STYLE

Bachata singer Prince Royce says he got a wake-up call with a COVID-19 diagnosis.

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Local

Seven former IPI workers seek \$11.58M in damages

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The seven China-based former workers of a then-contractor and a subcontractor of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC are seeking a total of \$11.58 million in compensatory damages against IPI in connection with their lawsuit. They also want payment for attorneys' fees and court costs.

That's \$3,863,534 in compensatory damages plus \$7.72 million punitive damages, for a grand total of \$11.58 million.

Aaron Halegua and Bruce Berline, who are counsel for the plaintiffs, said this amount is reasonable for the "slave-like" conditions and severe injuries the plaintiffs endured. The two said attorneys' fees and costs are available to the plaintiff under the Trafficking Victims Protection Re-Authorization Act when a default judgment is entered. Therefore, the lawyers said they request that a briefing schedule be set at the Aug. 7 hearing concerning an award of fees and costs.

Last June 12, U.S. Dis-

trict Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona entered a default judgment against IPI during a show-cause hearing, describing IPI's noncompliance with court orders and delays in this lawsuit as "mindboggling and "very frustrating."

IPI general counsel Michael Dotts earlier stated that they disagree with Manglona and that they will move to reconsider her decision.

The plaintiffs filed Thursday their petition for damages. The plaintiffs—Tianming Wang, Dong Han, Yongjun Meng, Liangcai Sun, Youli Wang, Quingehun Xu, and Xiyang Du—are suing IPI, MCC International Saipan Ltd. Co. and MCC's subcontractor Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC over the alleged injuries they suffered during accidents at the worksite of IPI's casino project in Garapan.

In their petition for damages Thursday, Halegua and Berline said that Tianming Wang suffered burnt leg, Han had a crushed finger, Sun had a severed finger, Meng had

» **China-based plaintiffs also demand attorneys' fees, court costs**

burnt hand and leg, Xu had an inverted ankle, Youli Wang had a fractured finger, and Du had a crushed finger. The plaintiffs are seeking compensatory damages for emotional distress, lost income, future lost income, and pain and suffering.

Tianming Wang is seeking



Halegua



Berline

\$1,025,057 in total compensatory damages; Han \$565,203; Sun \$474,244 (excluding future lost income as not available); Meng \$416,450 (excluding future lost income as not available); Xu \$460,467; Youli Wang \$492,946; and Du \$429,167 (excluding future

lost income as not available).

Halegua and Berline said the plaintiffs were defrauded into paying enormous fees for work on Saipan, indebting themselves to family, friends, or loan sharks, only to spend each day in fear of being beaten, fired, fined, or deported; that the plaintiffs were treated like "machines," not human, working 13-hour days for less than minimum wage without a day off in up to five months.

"It was the most dangerous worksite that plaintiffs had ever seen—tired workers performing evening shifts high-up on the casino scaffolding with no safety nets," Halegua and Berline said.

Plaintiffs were allegedly humiliated by bosses who called them *heigong* ("illegal workers") and ridiculed for being "stupid"

because they paid a recruitment fee for their job. Halegua and Berline said one manager allegedly poured a cheap Chinese liquor on Youli Wang's wound. Sun allegedly had to rely on his cell phone's translation app to try to buy medicine for his severed finger at a

local pharmacy. Wang allegedly paid his own taxi fare to get back to the dorm after his leg was incinerated. Halegua and Berline said the impact of this conduct by IPI and its contractors on plaintiffs' lives has been ruinous. They said most plaintiffs remain in debt years after returning from Saipan. They said one lives with his sister, away from his son and mother, because he fears the loan sharks in his hometown. Wang has allegedly been unable to work in three years since his leg was engulfed by flames. Every day, Wang allegedly endures the shame and embarrassment of wanting to support his parents, but instead watching his 51-year-old father endure backbreaking work to support him and his daughter.

Han allegedly accepts money from his elderly father's pension.

The lawyers said IPI not only condoned this inhumane treatment, but actively participated in and benefitted from the forced labor scheme. They noted that when Occupational Safety and Health Administration discovered that 80 workers were seriously injured in a single year, IPI still denied the inspector access to the site.

Halegua and Berline said IPI took no action upon seeing unpaid workers protest or being told that workers on tourist visas were building its casino.

Instead, IPI allegedly praised MCC for doing a great job while it earned billions of U.S. dollars in revenue.

The lawyers said three plaintiffs worked for MCC and then later worked for Gold Mantis; the remaining four only worked for Gold Mantis.

Halegua and Berline said MCC and Gold Mantis were aware of the plaintiffs' debts, but each still charged them an additional fee after they arrived on Saipan in order to start working.

The lawyers said the forced labor scheme only came to an end after a tourist worker fell to his death on the construction site in March 2017, prompting a Federal Bureau of Investigation raid of IPI's contractor.

The lawyers said Gold Mantis managers fled Saipan, leaving plaintiffs unpaid in decrepit housing without food and water. "Only then were plaintiffs finally taken to the hospital on Saipan," they said.

IPI, MCC, and Gold Mantis have denied the plaintiffs' allegations.

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NMC to go hybrid in fall semester

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College has adjusted its plan for the upcoming fall semester. Instead of taking a full, face-to-face approach, NMC is working on mixing face-to-face classes with online classes.

In an interview with NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico, he said that NMC is set on a blended or hybrid approach in the fall semester to ensure the safety of students and employees of NMC since the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing.

"It's going to be a blended approach, and we'll be providing more details and, as the weeks go by, we'll have more information. We want to make sure that the safety and welfare of our students and our employees, who include our cleaning staff, our maintenance folks everyone. We want to make sure that they're safe. We are not rushing back to this in-person, classroom situation so we're doing a blended approach but the details to that will be announced throughout the summer," he said.

Eliptico said NMC will assist students who don't have the resources for a hybrid approach. These are students who may not have internet or laptops to take online classes. "We have been providing some assistance in lending some devices where necessary but, by and large, the students have been able to access the internet from home using their mobile devices either on their phone, their laptop or another device to access the classes. So we've been accommodating individual needs as

much as we can but...our students have been able to access those classes," he said.

Eliptico said NMC has come up with the hybrid approach plan because it wants to avoid as much face-to-face interaction as possible for safety purposes. "When we do have those in-person elements, we will be, of course, maximizing space between students. Again, we want to avoid having those face-to-face interactions if they're not entirely necessary. For those classes that can be successfully offered throughout the whole semester online, we will do that but there are some classes that have that in-person element, and those classes will then have components of the semester in person. We are looking at it class by class, so it's not like all classes will be half online and half in-person. We're looking at each class to make sure that we are maintaining the quality of the instruction, as well as the engagement of the student throughout the whole semester," Eliptico said.

He explained that the hybrid approach would mix physical classes with virtual classes since there are some classes that cannot be done completely online.

"Our default is to have it online. But if there are components of the class, for example, if there's a lab component, whether it's a science class it's another class that involves some sort of hands-on, or face-to-face requirement that will be accommodated in person," Eliptico said.

NMC's current summer semester remains completely online.

Sablan: More actions needed to help the CNMI cope

By **IVA MAURIN**
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan spoke before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources last Tuesday to rally actions the U.S. Congress can do for the people of the Marianas, who are gravely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Noting the islands' ability to seal itself from the rest of the world as one of its unique advantages in the pandemic, Sablan also noted in his testimony the disadvantage of having to revive an economy that is

» Delegate urges U.S. Senate to take up HEROES Act

dependent on tourists, which the CNMI does not have now. "How can we welcome visitors back to the islands, while ensuring those visitors are not bringing disease? Eventually, if there is a vaccine, we could return to the old normal, as long as visitors could reliably certify they were vaccinated. But that is a big 'if,'" he said.

According to the delegate, reality must be faced that the

CNMI may never again exclusively base its economy on short-term mass tourism and, instead, find alternatives. "For instance, our robust cable connections and the competitive advantage of our time zone, just this month, led Colorado-based InteliSecure, Inc. to begin hiring for a cybersecurity operation in the Marianas.

"We could grow our existing educational facilities, which IS already attract long-term-stay students from Korea and other Asian locations. We could obtain new classes of visas that would permit longer-term, second-home owners in

the Marianas," he added.

With no extractable resources, Sablan stressed the need to invest in the CNMI's human resources, as well as be more energy independent and be more self-sustaining when it comes to food.

Initiatives from the government

In his testimony, Sablan also raised that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has already taken the initiative to help move the CNMI forward. "Governor Torres has already taken the initiative. He brought Mari-

See **SABLAN** on Next Page



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PUBLIC NOTICE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DISASTER RECOVERY (CDBG-DR)

TO ALL INTERESTED CITIZENS, INDIVIDUALS, AGENCIES AND GROUPS:

Notice is hereby given that the Office of the Governor through NMHC is soliciting for citizen input and suggestions for the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Action Plan commencing on June 19, 2020 to July 20, 2020. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) will receive \$243,946,000 as a result of Disaster Nos. 4396 and 4404. Not less than \$195,157,000 must be utilized in HUD-identified "most impacted and distressed" areas of Tinian and Saipan. The main purpose of this public notice is to inform the public about program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of disaster recovery funds as a result of Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu.

All citizens are encouraged to provide input on how the CDBG-DR funds will be allocated and used. The purpose of CDBG-DR funding is to address significant unmet needs for long-term recovery. There is an array of eligible activities for CDBG-DR funding that include:

- Housing
- Disaster Relief
- Long Term-Recovery
- Restoration of Infrastructure
- Economic Revitalization

Further information on the program and Action Plan may be obtained by contacting Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director or Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation at 670-234-6866/9447 or by visiting NMHC's website at www.nmhc.gov.net. Written comments may be faxed to fax no. (670) 234-9021, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to email address cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhc.gov.net.

/s/
Ralph DLG. Torres, Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands

/s/
Arnold I. Palacios, Lt. Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands

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TESTS

From Page 1

In a radio interview with Esther Muña, chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., she said the returning resident was tested last July 2, five days after arriving on Saipan (which is the current standard procedure), and was confirmed positive on the night of that date.

This was the first positive case since the last positive case that was confirmed last June 9, Muña added.

She said the individual is asymptomatic, responded to the SaraAlert that he did not have symptoms, and had no symptoms when he was assessed on the night of June 2. Additionally, the individual was quarantined at home.

“We knew this person traveled

from a hotspot in the U.S. and traveled to Guam and then to the CNMI. As soon as we identified [that] the result came back positive, our contact tracers were automatically activated,” she said.

The person’s close contacts—those who were exposed to the individual—were brought to the hospital so that CHCC’s medical staff can make an assessment and try to contain any infection, Muña said.

As the number of COVID-19 cases in the United States and Guam continue to accelerate, Muña said that there will be changes to the testing procedures for arriving passengers. This includes being tested twice—once upon arrival and another on the fifth day when any symptoms start to show.

“We could test you on arrival but there’s always a risk. And the risk

is that the virus may not show, especially if they recently just got exposed and so the purpose of waiting after five days allows the viruses to be visible upon testing on the PCR,” said Muña. A PCR is a polymerase chain reaction, considered the gold standard in COVID-19 testing.

It used to be that all arriving passengers—who were mostly returning resident—were immediately placed in a government-sanctioned quarantine site. The new system now allows incoming passengers to do home quarantine. The new protocols became effective last July 4.

Protocols for nonresidents will remain the same. This includes: arriving with a PCR test, taking another PCR test at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, filling out a CNMI declaration form at least three days prior to landing in the

CNMI, registering under SaraAlert, and be self-quarantined.

The CNMI now has a total of 31 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with two deaths and one active case.

The following is the community-based testing schedule for Tinian:

■ District 1 on July 7, Tuesday:

□ Mariana at 8:30am-11:30am;

□ Hofschneider’s Hardware at 1pm-4pm.

□ Marpo Heights on July 8, Wednesday: Ace Hardware at 8:30am-11am

□ Broadway, 42nd St. corner at 1pm-4pm

■ Carolinas Heights on July 9, Thursday:

□ Bus Stop No. 4 at 8:3am-11am

□ Carolinas Heights Water Tank at 1pm-4pm

Individuals must have the following when going to test sites:

face covering/face mask, valid identification, and bottled water to stay hydrated. Appointments are not necessary, registration will be on-site.

COVID-19 in Guam

According to the Joint Information Center on Guam, the Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 306 individuals for COVID-19 last July 3. Two tested positive and 304 tested negative. Additionally, results include samples from COVID-19 community testing at the Yigo Gym on July 2.

To date, Guam has a total of 288 confirmed cases, with five deaths, 179 released from isolation, and 104 active cases. According to JIC, of those cases, 242 are classified as civilians and 46 are military service members.

TONY

From Page 1

CEO Robert Jones, the twin closures are a difficult decision to make. “The economy is posing unprecedented challenges for local businesses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, most especially businesses like our restaurants that rely heavily on our tourism and hospitality industry. While we are confident that the economy will eventually recover, there is just too much uncertainty on how soon that will be,” he said.

“We have done our best to try and navigate through this uncharted territory and have exhausted all options, so much that after much deliberation, we have made the difficult decision to

close our doors this month,” he added.

In the U.S. mainland, retail and restaurant businesses have been hit the hardest by the pandemic and its effects are being felt elsewhere in the world, including the CNMI where tourism is the main source of income of many businesses and the local economy.

Tony Roma’s, known worldwide for its American cuisine with ribs and steak as specialties, and Capricciosa, known for its Southern Italian dishes, originally opened its doors on Saipan in 1997 at the La Fiesta Mall in San Roque.

Many residents took to Facebook to express surprise and sadness that these restaurants are closing. On Tony Roma’s page, Szasza Repane Wenceslao wrote that she is very sad to hear the news, while Letty Narito

Mateo was optimistic, “There will be no goodbyes, Tony Roma’s. We will wait for your reopening.”

Another resident, Yogi Singh, recalls dining at Capricciosa in 2005 when it was still at the La Fiesta Mall. “I remember every Tuesday was ‘eat-all-you-can pasta’ and it was always a great dining experience with friends. They had a great ambiance at La Fiesta and it is sad to see this restaurant close again this time. It is a shame that businesses are forced to close due to the pandemic. It is like an avalanche that started and will not stop until things go back to normal or until we get a vaccine,” he said.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

BUDGET

From Page 1

Based on the proposed budget submitted by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to the Legislature in April, PSS is to be allocated \$17.5 million, a major cut from its \$37.7 million fiscal year 2020 budget. The governor proposed \$153,131 for the PSS board, also a far cry from the \$322,837 allocation last year.

NMC, on the other hand, is proposed to be allocated \$2.8 million, from the \$5.9 million allocated in last year’s budget. Its board of regents is being proposed to be allocated \$51,158, also a huge difference from last fiscal year’s \$107,853.

The Department of Finance identified a gross budgetary resource of \$144.4 million (as of March), with only \$70.62 million in net resources that will be divvied up for the entire CNMI government. Also allocated is \$50,813,963, or 35% set aside, for the legal obligations of the government to the Settlement Fund to pay 75% of class member benefits.

In his proposal, Torres cited the complete collapse of the CNMI tourism industry for the significant cuts in revenue, forcing the government to readjust its budget. He also stressed that, in the absence of the CNMI tourism industry and in terms of economic development, recovery efforts must be prioritized to revitalize the economy.

“We must continue to provide valuable services to the community;

assess and improve areas affecting our current fiscal health, including the need to restructure government services; and reduce or eliminate redundancy,” he said in a letter to the Legislature.

With the significant reduction in resources, the governor noted that available funding “is only sufficient to cover 40 hours per pay period, which is 50% less what an employee will normally take home from an 80-hour per pay period.” They also considered minimal allocation for the delivery of basic public services.

Funding requested by

The departments’ original request was for a total of \$215,446,529.

To maintain a balanced budget, critical activities and programs are considered with minimal allocation, with the governor also listing several assumptions and considerations, which include the payment of 75% of the salaries for retirees; 25% for PSS; and the 20-hour workweek for all employees with the exception of constitutionally mandated salaries.

It also included considerations for the \$6,484,168, to fund the transfer of Medical Referral to the Commonwealth HealthCare Corp.; \$1 million for NMC; and \$400,000 for Latte Academy.

The governor also proposed removing all non-profit organizations in the budget, and the migration of 137 employees to other programs outside the general fund, either 100% or pro-rated time. This, according to the governor, will result in a net expenditure budget of \$70,623,458.

“This net budget requirement excludes expenditures to be absorbed by sources outside the general fund, such as the leases from public lands and transfer of eligible expenditures into non-general fund sources amounting to \$4,555,709 and \$2,610,000 respectively,” he said. “The net operating budget for appropriation is \$70,623,458, an amount equal to resources available for general appropriations and represents a balanced budget.”

Accordingly, the proposed budget excludes six non-profit organizations that the government can no longer sustain at the moment, which include the Humanities Council, Ayuda Network, Domestic Violence, and Karidat.

In addition, the proposed budget also reflects the elimination of all vacant positions that were not filled and can no longer be supported.

“The government is considering the implementation of a reduction-in-force that will carry over into the new fiscal year. A combined total of 99 vacant positions are removed in this proposed budget,” he said.

Based on the proposal, the Executive Branch will lose the most, with 107 positions to be reduced, followed by independent programs with 31, the First Senatorial District with 12, the Second Senatorial District with 11, and both the Judiciary and the Boards and Commissions with 4.

Tomorrow, the House Ways and Means Committee will hear the budgets of the Saipan Mayor’s Office and the Marianas Visitors Authority.

FIRM

From Page 1

were recovered during excavation at the same site in the late ’90s.

Swift and Harper Archaeological Resource Consulting, or SHARC, informed the Historic Preservation Office last Wednesday that they do not agree with the reburial of those remains that were dug up before the Best Sunshine-IPI casino/resort project until all analyses and reporting are done on the previously dug up remains.

In a letter to HPO administrator Rita Chong-Dela Cruz, SHARC officers Michael A. Fleming, Marilyn K. Swift, and Randy A. Harper stated, however, that they have no problem with the reburial of the hu-

man remains that were dug up during the excavation for IPI casino/resort project because they assume that the required excavations and reporting were completed for these remains.

IPI senior vice president for Public Affairs Tao Xing said yesterday that the reburial will be done sometime the end of this month, but that it’s HPO that is making the plan.

In the same letter to HPO, SHARC officers said that, in considering HPO’s offer, they find themselves in an “interesting and conflicted” situation since it was SHARC that excavated the same IPI property for the Nakamoto Corp. in the late ’90s.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

SABLAN

From Page 3

anas community leaders together in April to begin to answer the question of where we go from here and what steps we need to take.”

Torres, with the COVID-19 Task Force and his economic council, has initiated a color-coded community vulnerability scheme to guide the CNMI businesses and the community in general, on what to plan for and do, depending on the scale of the COVID-19 spread on the island.

The governor has also been calling to diversify the economy, promoting agriculture and fishing and encouraging non-tourism industries to come to the islands and help create jobs.

Torres has also identified two action items that the U.S. Congress can do: direct financial aid to the Commonwealth government and a waiver of the local match for Federal Emergency Management Agency grants. Sablan said that Congress is already working on these.

More actions needed

At the hearing, Sablan identified actions that the Marianas will be needing from Congress, to help recover fully.

For the long-term, Congress could “facilitate the economic changes the Marianas decides on, whether that means new classes of visas, support for energy independence, or modernizing infrastructure.”

“In the near term, to prop up individuals, small businesses, and the local government, all of which had incomes shredded by the pandemic. And, always, Congress must direct resources to health care, to local providers and to researchers in national labs, so this disease does not overwhelm us,” he added.

Over 400 small businesses in the Marianas have already received \$37 million through the Small Business Administration’s Paycheck Protection Program; \$70 million has been initially set aside for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, which qualified displaced workers in the CNMI are expected to receive in the next week; and \$49 million has been credited to Marianas taxpayers in Economic Impact Payments.

“Our schools are receiving in excess of \$30 million. We are eligible for the range of grants provided by the Families First and CARES Acts, for health care, child care, and food aid. And, as mentioned, the Commonwealth government received \$36 million to cover unbudgeted costs,” Sablan said.

Despite all these, and recognizing that there is still struggles ahead, Sablan urged the U.S. Senate to immediately take up the HEROES Act, which builds on policies Congress previously enacted in the Families First and CARES Acts, providing further help for American families, businesses, and state and local governments through the COVID-19 crisis.

YouTube channel brings more exposure for Marianas

YouTube channel “Deer Meat for Dinner” has premiered its latest series of episodes filmed in the Marianas, bringing exposure of the islands to a new demographic of potential visitors.

Deer Meat for Dinner features hunting, fishing, diving, and cooking of wild game and is filming and posting from the Northern Islands in the Marianas. The program has 2.5 million subscribers, and the first nine episodes on the Marianas—including episodes filmed on Rota and Saipan two years ago—have garnered 13.4 million views to date. The return last month

of producer and host Rob Arrington, accompanied by his family, garnered 317,000 views within the first four days alone.

“Our Northern Islands can play an important role in highlighting the incredible beauty of and promoting our islands,” said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “The MVA regularly partners with digital influencers in Korea, China, Japan, and Taiwan to promote the Marianas. In this new age of social media and platforms like YouTube and the celebrities fostered by these platforms, we want to advantage of opportunities to showcase the Marianas when those opportunities are made available to us.”

Arrington is in the Northern



Islands accompanied by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

“We need to capitalize on every opportunity to showcase the Marianas, especially

during this downtime in tourism,” said Iakopo. “Mr. Arrington, like many others who have visited our islands, fell in love with the beauty of our

islands and our people. We are extremely thankful to him for showcasing our islands.”

Iakopo said Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold Palacios believe

that the key to protecting the Northern Islands from destructive military use is to promote environmental protection and environmentally sustainable development, promote the northern islands role in Marianas tourism mix/offers/composition, and move forward with agricultural homesteads and repopulation of some islands.

The Deer Meat for Dinner program can be viewed at [YouTube.com/c/deermeatfordinner](https://www.youtube.com/c/deermeatfordinner), or type “Deer Meat for Dinner” in the YouTube search bar. (MVA)

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Attorney for Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane
for Claimant Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Civil Action No. 20-0140
AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION OR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION; NOTICE TO CREDITORS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JOSEPH D. ALDAN, Decedent.
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Judge: Joseph N. Camacho

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE JOSEPH D. ALDAN OR OF HIS ESTATE:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, Merced M. Tomokane for Creditor Bank of Guam, of Saipan, CNMI (“Petitioner”), has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for Letter of Administration of the Estate of Joseph D. Aldan, Decedent. The attorney for Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Esq., whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by Merced M. Tomokane, as Petitioner for Creditor Bank of Guam, is scheduled to be heard on Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guma’ Hustisia, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors or entities having claims against the Decedent or his estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of this publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to ROBERT TENORIO TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.

It is further ordered, to avoid any unnecessary delays:

(a) those who will be attending in-person in the courtroom, COVID-19 protective measures such as social distancing, use of mask and sanitizers, etc. are enforced.
(b) those who will be attending via video conference shall file a Request with a Proposed Order. If granted, the party(ies)/attorney(s) shall contact the Deputy Clerk Adeline Tereyama at (670) 235-4261 or via email at adeline.tereyama@nmjjudiciary.com to test the video conference system in advance.

Dated this 16th day of June, 2020.

/s/
Judge Joseph Norita Camacho

The Marianas offers a breath of fresh air for cautious travelers looking to experience nature and open spaces after months of confinement due to COVID-19. The Marianas, a U.S. commonwealth, is located in the western Pacific, just three or four hours from major Asian gateway cities. With a population of about 50,000 people spread across the main islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, this archipelago offers year-round tropical weather with plenty of space and options for outdoor activities.

The CNMI government plans to open the CNMI to international flights starting July 15.

The Marianas has had only two COVID-19-related deaths; robust government health protocols enacted early in the worldwide pandemic were welcomed with strong community compliance. Fif-

CNMI prepares to welcome visitors for fresh air



Akiko Hagiwara, left, and Ayano Braxton, enjoy a morning run on Saipan. MVA



Taga Beach on the island of Tinian offers a breath of fresh air for travelers. MVA

teen percent of the population has been tested for the virus, one of the highest testing rates in the U.S., and the destination has the capacity to test every resident. The destination is at Community Vulnerability

Level Blue, one level short of Green and normal operations under a five-level economic recovery plan. In cooperation with public health officials, hotels, tour operators and tourism industry stakeholders

have established internal standard operating procedures, including thermal scanning, for mitigating risk.

“The Marianas has enacted a number of protocols that have helped keep our community and visitors safe, which is now allowing us to ease restrictions and transition to a ‘new normal’ where people can start to enjoy normal activities while practicing enhanced safety measures,” said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. “As the Marianas reopens, we want our visitors to feel safe and comfortable during their stay. Public health officials will continue to monitor the situation and implement measures on products and services toward the goal of keeping both visitors and residents healthy. Our strong public health guidelines, our low population density, and our abundance of outdoors activities available year-round in this tropical paradise make us an ideal destination. We look forward to welcoming more visitors to The Marianas, where every experience is a breath of fresh air.”

Outdoor activities available in the Marianas are numerous. Watersports include diving, swimming, snorkeling, jet-skiing, parasailing, windsurfing, fishing, kayaking, paddle

boarding, marine life encounters, and more. Land activities include guided tours of historic and scenic sites, hiking, walking, ATV/UTV tours, picnicking, museums, and more. Restaurants and stores are open at 50% capacity with strict requirements for 6-foot social distancing. Masks are required when entering most business establishments and are recommended but optional in public.

Nonresident travelers entering the Marianas who complete all of the following steps in order may be responsibly exempted from the 14-day quarantine process:

Fill out an online CNMI Mandatory Declaration Form at least three days prior to their arrival in the Marianas at www.governor.gov.mp/covid19/travel;

Register and respond daily to the Sara Alert Symptom Monitoring System

Have proof of a valid polymerase chain reaction test at least three days prior to their arrival on the Marianas. The test result will then be reviewed by a CNMI Health Representative.

For more information on entry requirements, visit governor.gov.mp. For more information on the Marianas, visit the MVA at www.mymarianas.com. (MVA)



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)

(This is ad is paid for NMHC with HUD funds)

Amendment No.1
NMHC IFB 2020-008

BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME: July 21, 2020 July 31, 2020, 10:00 a.m.

Purchase and Installation of Lighting Fixtures for the Oleai Track and Field Facility

Project package will be available on June 19, 2020, at the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net.

The provisions of the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid conference will be held via video teleconferencing on June 30, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. through Zoom Video Communications. Bidders will be provided the video teleconferencing link on the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30a.m. – 4:30p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios

/s/
Vinyne Atalig - Hocog

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859 | Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Petitioner Merced M. Tomokane for
Claimant Bank of Guam

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Civil Action No. 20-0180-CV
AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION OR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION; NOTICE TO CREDITORS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: JOSEY JAY S. MARATTA, Decedent.
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Judge: Joseph N. Camacho

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE JOSEY JAY S. MARATTA OR OF HIS ESTATE:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, Merced M. Tomokane for Bank of Guam, of Saipan, CNMI (“Petitioner”), has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for Letter of Administration of the Estate of Josey Jay S. Maratta, Decedent. The attorney for Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Esq., whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by Merced M. Tomokane, as Petitioner for Creditor Bank of Guam, is scheduled to be heard on Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guma’ Hustisia, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors or entities having claims against the Decedent or his estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of this publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to ROBERT TENORIO TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.

Dated this 22nd day of June, 2020.

/s/
Judge Joseph Norita Camacho

Labor: Vacation pay will affect eligibility for PUA

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Department of Labor confirmed at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting last Wednesday that vacation pay and sick leave pay could affect one's eligibility to receive Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

In the meeting that was held virtually, Eugene Tebuteb, Department of Labor Employment Services director, confirmed that vacation pay and sick leave pay should be reported when applying for PUA and this could impact one's eligibility. Tebuteb, however, did not elaborate on this subject.

According to Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente, who was also one of the guest speakers at the meeting, those who still need assistance in filling out PUA application forms, both online and physical application, may call Labor and that they are open to answering any questions to the best of their abilities. Benavente added that their office is open, but with strict social distancing protocols in place.

"We can assist PUA applicants when you come up to the department. We will assist you with your inquiries...but please be patient, we are trying to assist everyone," she said. Benavente said she is aware and understands the frustration that many are having with the application process and encourages those who are having trouble, if it's possible, to wait until all the kinks are worked out.

"The deadline to apply for PUA is December so it would be a wise decision to wait a couple of more weeks until we iron out the technical difficulties," she said.

As of last Monday, over 5,000 online and physical PUA application have been submitted, Benavente said, and DOL is trying to sift through these applications as quickly as possible to get payments out to the public, soon.

However, of the over 5,000 applications, less than 1,000 are considered "complete." Individuals with "complete" applications can expect their first PUA payment in the next seven to eight days.

"The numbers are really low because the majority of applications are incomplete so I'm going to estimate less than 1,000 are complete, so these are going to be processed quicker than the incomplete applications. For the complete applications, payments will be made between seven to eight days, so let me stress, complete applications will be processed fairly quickly. [For] incomplete [applications], we have to call our clients to bring this document or letter or whatever is incomplete," she said.

Each tuition grant is set at a level that maintains family ownership in student achievement, while lightening the financial burden. Often scholarships cover between 50 and 75% of school tuition and fees. Students must maintain and report high levels of academic achievement every quarter, applying each year for continued support.

Habele awards scholarships, celebrates US-Micronesian partnership

Twenty-two students from across the four states of Micronesia were awarded tuition scholarships last week, making it possible for them to attend faith-based independent elementary and high schools in Yap, Chuuk and Pohnpei.

Habele tuition scholarships are funded entirely by the individual donations of American citizens who share a love of Micronesia and the belief that high quality education can unlock the incredible personal potential of some of the world's most remote students.

Each tuition grant is set at a level that maintains family ownership in student achievement, while lightening the financial burden. Often scholarships cover between 50 and 75% of school tuition and fees. Students must maintain and report high levels of academic achievement every quarter, applying each year for continued support.

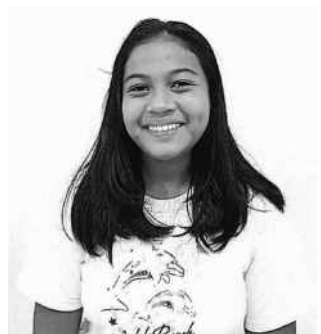
Habele is a U.S. nonprofit established by former Peace Corps volunteers who lived and taught in Micronesia. It first issued tuition scholarships in 2006. This year 30 individual Americans from 16 different states donated to fund the 2020-21 tuition scholarships.

Donors included former Peace Corps volunteers, tourists who had visited Micronesia, and the sons and daughters of Americans who served in Micronesia in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Three of the 22 scholarships awarded this year were memorial scholarships.

"Memorial scholarships honor the legacy of Americans whose life or work demonstrated exceptional commitment to the people of Micronesia," explained Habele's founder, Neil Mellen. "They embodied the best of the long-standing U.S.-Micronesian partnership."

The Lee Huddleston memorial scholarship, established this year, honors the life of Lee Joseph Huddleston of Eugene, Oregon. Lee lost his life in February of 2020, rescuing a group of children caught in a rip tide while swimming off Moch island, where he was



Sheridan Giltamag of Yap is one of 21 Habele tuition scholarship recipients for 2020-21. Awarded the Leona Peterson Memorial Scholarship, she will be a freshman at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School in Pohnpei in the fall.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

working for the Chuuk State Department of Education. Lee had also served as a Peace Corps volunteer, teaching in Weno.

The Leona Peterson Memorial Scholarship provides tuition assistance to a young woman in elementary or high school high school attending an independent school in either Yap or Pohnpei. It honors the work of Paterson, who led Department of Aging in the

Drug trafficking charges are dismissed

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho dismissed Wednesday an information charging a man of alleged trafficking crystal methamphetamine or "ice."

Camacho dismissed the case against Huaishu Wang without prejudice, following a motion by assistant attorney general Chester Hinds. This means the Office of the Attorney General may re-file the case.

The information, which was filed last June 26, charged the 38-year-old Wang with trafficking of a controlled substance, conspiracy to commit

trafficking of a controlled substance, and illegal possession of a controlled substance.

In his motion to dismiss filed Wednesday, Hinds said the government believes it is in the interest of justice to dismiss this case without prejudice. He did not elaborate.

At the scheduled preliminary hearing last June 26, Nicole M. Torres-Ripple appeared as the court-appointed counsel for Wang. Camacho relieved Torres-Ripple as the court-appointed counsel for Wang after he was informed that the defendant has hired Janet H. King as his lawyer. The preliminary hearing was

supposed to continue last Wednesday.

According to the information, Wang engaged in trafficking and conspiracy to commit trafficking methamphetamine on Saipan last Dec. 19.

Wang was allegedly found in possession of "ice" last June 18. According to court documents, CNMI Drug Enforcement Task Force members arrested Wang and Shuo Qiu on Navy Hill last June 18 on the same charges.

DETf allegedly managed to purchase during a "controlled buy operation" 3.6 gross grams of "ice" worth \$1,200 from Wang in Garapan last Dec. 19.

and an interactive map of airports receiving funding is available on the FAA website.

The total includes \$689 million from the Airport Improvement Program and \$104.4 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act grants to equal a 100 percent federal share. (PR)

Nearly \$800M awarded to 347 airports

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Secretary of Transportation will award nearly \$800 million in airport safety and infrastructure grants through the Federal Aviation Administration to 46 states, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Marshall Islands.

"This nearly \$800 million federal investment in airport infrastructure will strengthen safety, improve travel, generate jobs and provide many economic benefits for local communities," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

A complete listing of grants

Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands during the late 1970s and early 80s.

The Marshall Paul Wees Memorial Scholarship is named for a U.S. Navy doctor who served the people of Ulithi Atoll during the War in the Pacific. Wees, working with limited supplies and assisted only by a pharmacist's aide, stamped out the terrible scourge of yaws, a debilitating disease that was ravaging the Ulithian population.

"At this time of so many challenges across the globe, I hope these modest tuition scholarships will be a subtle reminder of the deeply personal, decades long and historically unique partnership between the Micronesian and American Peoples" said Mellen. (PR)

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CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Tel: (670) 664-2371 | Fax: (670) 664-2408 | Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION TO BID ITB20-GOV-079

Rota Infrastructure Maintenance Project – Renovation of the Rota Department of Public Safety's Operations and Administration Buildings

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are soliciting sealed bids for the *Rota Infrastructure Maintenance Project – Renovation of the Rota Department of Public Safety's Operations and Administration Buildings* in Songsong Village, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This project will be funded by the 702 Covenant funding under the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs.

The project package will be available on **June 22, 2020** at the CIP Program Office, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building in Capitol Hill, Saipan. **All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) in Capitol Hill.**

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations currently in effect and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70.30.3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference on **July 8, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** at the project site in Songsong Village, Rota. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Viola Marie DeLeon Guerrero in writing by e-mail: viola.marie.dlg@pticom.com or on or before **July 13, 2020** to the Capital Improvement Program, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Administration Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or fax (670) 664-2408. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-079 Rota Infrastructure Maintenance Project – Renovation of the Rota Department of Public Safety's Operations and Administration Buildings**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:30 a.m. ChST, July 22, 2020**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:30 a.m. ChST, July 22, 2020** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to amagolda@dot.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **July 22, 2020** and mailed to the Acting Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. Box 510008 C.K., Saipan, MP 96950 and the bid documents must be received no later than **July 31, 2020**. Failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at **10:30 a.m. ChST, August 3, 2020**. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at **10:30 a.m. ChST, July 22, 2020**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check. If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract. Acceptable assets are only:

- Cash
- US Government Securities
- Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is Three Hundred (300) calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be \$200.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

(To be part of Solicitation for quotes, ITBs and RFPS)

- Gratuities.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefor. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).
- Kickbacks.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontract or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b).
- Contingent Fees.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor

Francisco C. Aguin
Acting Director, CNMI Procurement & Supply

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

United we stand; divided we fall—to the coronavirus

We stand with Hugo's Tacos.

On Sunday, the Los Angeles business took the extreme measure of temporarily closing its two locations, in Studio City and Atwater Village, to give employees "a break" from verbal and physical abuse by customers outraged that employees were enforcing the law requiring face coverings.

During the closure, the staff will strategize ways to reopen in a way that complies with rules to limit spread of COVID-19 as well as insulates employees from having to endure the misplaced hostility of defiant patrons.

It was the responsible, if economically difficult, choice but it's a situation that no business should be forced into. People who don't like the laws made by county and state officials to control spread of infection should not take it out on workers just trying to earn a living.

Sadly, this is no isolated incident. Even as coronavirus cases are rebounding in many U.S. states, this same conflict is playing out in grocery stores, in restaurants, on busy streets and in other public places as people confronted for violating rules regarding wearing face masks or social distancing protocols lash out with unusual vitriol.

A store owner in rural California summed up the sentiment behind this defiance of scientifically sound measures and disregard for civic responsibility: "The deal is, you have no right to tell me I have to wear a mask. I'm an American. ... I refuse to bow to anybody."

He's wrong about that. Authorities do have the right, not to mention the responsibility, to require that Americans refrain from actions that endanger the lives of others. Some people may enjoy driving while drunk, and feel it is their God-given right to do so, but because so many drunk drivers have caused injury and death to others it is not permitted.

But more importantly, he is wrong about refusing to bow down to others. That's a crude way to put it, but being an American is not an excuse. It is the reason he should observe the laws and help others. That's just part of the deal of living in a modern civil society.

If the U.S. ever needed a reminder of the importance of the social contract that binds us to one other, it is now, as a new virus is raging through the land and civil discourse is so raw and ugly that there is open defiance of even the simplest protective measures. How hard is it to wear a face covering while ordering tacos, especially if it might save the life of a neighbor?

America's spirit of individualism seems to have metastasized into a cultural cancer that promotes distrust of any type of authority and disdain for fellow humans. And it may well doom the U.S. to a longer, deadlier and more economically destructive outbreak than we've already endured. There are signs of that already as several governors have stated backtracking on reopening plans as infection rates rise. If things get worse, more counties and more types of businesses might be shut down. That's not just harmful for the people who get sick; it harms the economic stability of communities and, by extension, the entire nation.

(c)2020 Los Angeles Times



The depressed state of the CNMI economy: A realistic plan is needed to turn it around

By JOSE S. DELA CRUZ

SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The COVID-19 pandemic that began about six months ago, instead of subsiding, has apparently started its "second wave," as Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Disease predicted with a degree of certainty a few months ago. This worldwide pandemic is probably the most serious public health crisis threatening the lives of millions worldwide.

The Northern Mariana Islands, with its small population of 60,000 people, has a fairly isolated location in the Pacific, which has spared our people from the brunt of this infectious and deadly disease. And for this, our people should all be grateful. Our distance from major population centers such as China, Japan, and Korea has apparently helped stem the spread of the virus to our islands.

The CNMI also has a low infection rate due to the preventive efforts taken by CNMI public health authorities. They took steps to prevent the spread of the deadly virus through the enforcement of social distancing measures, the wearing of face masks, and limiting social gatherings. Until an effective vaccine is developed to treat the coronavirus, such public health measures have been effective in slowing the spread of this unusually infectious disease. We should continue practicing such public health measures religiously.

A few weeks ago, the governor mentioned that "maybe now is probably a good time" to reassess our government priorities in terms of how the CNMI government dispenses public service. He apparently made this observation because one of the most adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the dramatic decline in the overall economy of the Commonwealth. As we have seen over the past several months the CNMI economy has literally been stagnant and government revenue collection has correspondingly fallen flat.

This week we learned that the CNMI government is experiencing a huge shortfall of over \$90 million in revenue collection for this fiscal year. This revenue shortfall is roughly 50% less than the previous fiscal year revenue collection, a huge decline that will undoubtedly affect essential public service, such as public health, education, public safety, and so forth. We should realize by now that the proverbial "seven fat years" that the Commonwealth enjoyed in the '80s and '90s left the CNMI a long time ago.

CNMI revenue collection, as we should recall, took a major dip (about 40%) soon after the garment industry left the CNMI in 2004. Four years later—in 2008—the national "housing crisis" took place in the U.S. This economic crisis toppled the national

banking industry, the country's mortgage industry, the U.S. automobile industry, and the giant insurance industry, among others. To save those industries and others from collapsing, the federal government had to step in and "bail out" these industries; otherwise, the U.S. would have fallen into another great depression, similar to the Great Depression of 1929.

During the first decade of this new century, we were shocked to learn that both United Airlines and Delta Airlines no longer found it profitable to continue servicing the Northern Marianas Islands. This major economic setback was preceded in 2004 by Japan Airlines, which abruptly stopped servicing the CNMI for the same reason. The CNMI market was no longer profitable enough to continue sustaining the three major air carriers.

As the youngest and smallest member of the American political family 40 years ago, the people of the CNMI looked with pride at the fact that we directly negotiated the terms of our political relationship with the United States, the most powerful country in the world. But as in any political relationship, we should realize that the Northern Marianas Covenant is not a perfect political instrument. Like the U.S. Constitution—considered the model for the institution of democracy—the Northern Marianas Covenant is simply the work of man trying to achieve what we believe would be the best possible governing terms for purposes of carrying forth our political relationship. But we should also realize that even the U.S. Constitution has been amended a number of times to adjust its terms either to include what was forgotten by the Framers (i.e. the Bill of Rights) or to address major issues due to changing times and values. One of the best examples of the subsequent amendments is the 14th Amendment's "Equal Protection Clause" and the 19th Amendment, which allowed women to vote.

In my book, *From Colonialism to Self-Government: The Northern Marianas Experience* (2010), published exactly a decade ago, I mentioned the importance for the leaders of the Northern Marianas to develop, draft and adopt a set of basic priorities and principles that the people of the CNMI should adopt at a general referendum. These basic priorities and principles should then serve as benchmarks for our leaders in the executive and legislative branches to follow and be guided by. These priorities and principles should set forth what we the people of the CNMI want to achieve, what we want to accomplish, and where we want to be as a group of people—40, 50, 60, and even a hundred years from today.

In particular, these priorities and principles should relate to such basic matters as having a viable and productive economy, *See CNMI on Next Page*

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The coming 2020 train wreck

President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden agree on one thing—the other side is trying to steal the election.

Trump told a gathering of students in Phoenix that this “will be, in my opinion, the most corrupt election in the history of our country.”

The president of the United States actively undermining faith in the electoral process is gross and unprecedented, but he’s not alone.

Asked by Trevor Noah of “The Daily Show” whether he worried the election would be rendered “moot” by his supporters being prevented from voting, Biden replied: “It’s my greatest concern. My single greatest concern. This president is going to try to steal this election.”

This wasn’t an isolated comment. “Mark my words,” he warned in May, “I think he is going to try to kick back the election somehow, come up with some rationale why it can’t be held.”

Yes, if there is one thing everyone can now agree on, it’s our inability to pull off a free and fair election.

Perhaps a handy victory by Biden or, much less likely, Trump will take the edge off the postgame acrimony, but it is going to be ugly regardless. If the election is close, the aftermath will be a norm-busting extravaganza of conspiracy theories, lawsuits and, at the very least, threats to take it to the streets.

If Trump loses, there’s unlikely to be a concession phone call—one of the little grace notes of our democracy—and he will argue that he was undone by Democratic cheating. Heck, he won in 2016 and still maintained he’d been cheated.

The transition would surely be unlike any we’ve ever seen, with the incumbent routinely insulting his soon-to-be successor. Trump would be likelier to live-tweet Biden’s inauguration than to attend.

And if he wins, it could be even even worse.

There were protests in the streets after Trump won in 2016. In the supercharged atmosphere of 2020, we shouldn’t be surprised by riots. After once again believing he’d inevitably lose and facing another intolerable four years of President Trump, the left’s shock and despair would be unlike anything either side in our politics has experienced in memory.

One of the ironies of the 2016 election is that Democrats rightly scolded Trump for preparing the ground not to accept the election result. Then, when he won, they resisted accepting the result themselves, preferring to believe that the election had been stolen by Russia.

A close result will obviously magnify feelings on both sides. The Florida vote controversy of 2000 was the height of recent domestic contention over a presidential election. Looking back,

By **RICH LOWRY**

King Features Synd., Inc.



Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

though, it was remarkably tame.

With control of the presidency hanging by a thread in Florida, there were no large-scale demonstrations, let alone violence. The legal briefs flew fast and furious and both former President George W. Bush and former Vice President Al Gore wanted to win and distrusted the legal and electoral maneuvers of the other side.

Yet there were things that neither of them would say in public and both of them were willing, if it came to that, to concede with grace. Both men were shaped by the post-World War II consensus in American politics. They had absorbed its standards and reflexively honored its guardrails.

That was 20 years, and an eon ago.

CNMI

From Page 8

an educated and skilled citizenry, a state-of-the-art public health system, a vibrant culture, a fostering of our unique customs and languages, and a respect and tolerance for all people who make our islands their home or who simply come here to visit. We should realize by now that prejudice, racism, hatred, and intolerance should not and must not have any place in our islands, or in the way we live and relate to each other.

We have already gone through 42 years of local self-government. But after all these years, what do we have to show for it today? What have we accomplished during the past 40 years? Very little, if any, as we all know. (And I’m not talking about the nice paved roads or about some of the so-called nice buildings we have, or even about the food stamps we receive from federal financial grants that some of my ardent critics believe are “proof of progress” made by the CNMI to date.) I’m talking, instead, about many of the industries that we have tried to develop and implement—and almost all of which have eventually failed.

Our first major economic failure, of course, is the garment/textile industry that we had in the ’80s and ’90s. We began that industry in the mid-1980s, with the garment industry established by one of our local entrepreneurs. During the same period, other textile companies from China and Korea started setting up shop in the CNMI in order to take advantage of the exemption given the CNMI from the U.S. textile “quota restriction” that a foreign country like China and Korea cannot exceed. So these foreign textile companies set up shop here because there is no textile quota restriction for the CNMI. General Head 3(a) exempted the U.S. territories from the textile quota restriction. In addition, goods manufactured in the CNMI are exempted from paying duty upon entry into the U.S. mainland.

In 2005, however, the World Trade Organization lifted the textile quota restriction and, within a year, all of the textile garment companies in the CNMI immediately left the Commonwealth without batting an eye. Why? Because labor is cheaper in their own country: China and Korea; even taking into account the customs duty that they would have to pay to enter the U.S. In the wake of their departure, these garment companies left abandoned buildings, warehouses and apartments, which to this day remain as eyesores around the island.

The next major industry that CNMI leaders worked ambitiously to bring into the Commonwealth, notwithstanding the overwhelming opposition by the general electorate to casino gaming at two previous public referenda, was the establishment of a casino gaming industry on Saipan. But the CNMI Legislature went ahead and met secretly, voted (literally “in the middle of the night”) and passed the casino gaming legislation. Never in the history of the CNMI had there ever been any legislation passed that was apparently drafted exclusively by the proponents of the casino industry for the sole purpose of granting an exclusive casino license to only one licensee, effectively creating a monopoly for this industry. But

this is exactly what CNMI elected leaders did.

This major piece of legislation was conceived, proposed, drafted, and passed with lightning speed from the time the idea was apparently first conceived in Macao. And what was the casino legislation’s crowning glory? It would grant to one exclusive licensee a monopoly on the entire casino industry on Saipan. This licensee would hold a strong sway over the independence of our elected leaders, both executive and legislative, as well as the regulatory commissions whose members and employees would be funded entirely by the licensing and other fees that the exclusive licensee/operator would be paying the CNMI government and the Commonwealth Casino Commission.

Astoundingly, the exclusive casino licensee—Imperial Pacific, Inc.—stated from the very beginning that it would invest \$7.1 billion in the CNMI. This is the extraordinary amount of money that the exclusive casino licensee promised to invest in an island measuring roughly 47 square miles and having a population of only 60,000 people. It leaves any person with a sound mind wondering whether such huge investment is “too good to be true.” But, as we have since found out five years later, this promised “investment” did turn out to be “too good to be true.”

Five years after the company was issued the exclusive casino license, it is now apparent that the sum promised to be invested was simply a wish. It was simply the casino licensee’s offer to invest such huge sum of money, apparently when and if it has such money. The fact of the matter is that the licensee apparently never had this amount of money. Ironically, this was the most critical issue that the Commonwealth Lottery Commission/Commonwealth Casino Commission should have looked into more carefully. It appears now that the commission did not perform the requisite amount of “due diligence” needed to determine the investor’s ability to carry out a project, the magnitude of which has never been carried out in the entire history of the CNMI. The commission apparently never investigated or audited carefully where this \$7.1 billion was coming from.

And how do we know this critical failure to conduct due diligence on the part of the commission? As the saying goes, “the chickens are now coming home to roost.” IPI, based on a number of recent federal court filings, today cannot even pay its contract workers, vendors and contractors. Over the past several months this year, we have seen case after case being filed in federal court by IPI contractors, vendors and workers seeking payment for services rendered or for work performed for IPI. As a result, the federal court recently issued several writs of execution against IPI to satisfy the various judgments rendered against IPI. And the flimsy excuse given by IPI for not paying the workers is this: Blame the federal court because it is the one which seized all the money that IPI has been keeping to make payroll for the workers.

Thus, this recent set of events that we are now learning appear to presage the demise of the casino gaming industry on Saipan—in real time.

The most viable industry for the CNMI, as we all know—with a proven track record of over 40 years—is, hands down, the visitor/tourist industry. But in order to make the visitor industry viable we have to work hard to make this industry suc-

cessful. We all know this. But we also know that, every now and then, a major typhoon would hit the islands and set back the visitor industry. So after every major storm, we need to immediately clean up the islands: clean up all the debris on all the beaches; clean up and maintain all the time all the public restrooms at the various park facilities; clean up Marpi, Bird Island, Managaha, Suicide Cliff, Banzai Cliff, Obyan Beach; and so forth. We must make sure that the all the tourist spots are safe and are adequately policed. For it only takes one tourist whose money and valuables are stolen to put a black eye on the entire CNMI tourist industry. It is a very competitive industry—but it is also a fickle industry.

The Marianas Visitors Authority must conduct effective meetings for all of its stakeholders: the tour bus operators, the hotels, the airlines, the community leaders, the taxi operators, the restaurant owners, DPS, golf courses, etc. We need to hear everyone’s concerns and needs. We also need to put on the front burner the idea of having a CNMI Cultural Center. Why can’t the CNMI have a cultural center? Why can’t we build a cultural center, say, within the next three years? If there is a loan that can be given by the Marianas Public Land Trust, why can’t the first loan be one for at least FIVE MILLION DOLLARS (\$5,000,000.00) to build a cultural center to showcase our Chamorro and Carolinian cultures? The proceeds from this cultural center could be partially used to pay off the cultural center loan. We clearly need to showcase our local dances, local songs, local food, and our arts and crafts. We need to coordinate with the Department of Public Safety and other agencies so that the safety of visitors is assured at all times. We should also provide other tourist amenities and recreational activities for residents and visitors alike. We just have not been doing this. Why? CNMI leaders and MVA—where are you guys?






After we finish the CNMI Cultural Center project, why can’t we go on and plan for, develop and construct, say, an “underwater aquarium” like the one they have in Palau? Maybe at the Grotto? How about planning for and developing a CNMI arboretum for native plants and flowers, including local medicinal herbs? And how about expanding the Saipan Museum so that we could depict in some detail our past history under the Spanish, German and Japanese regimes?

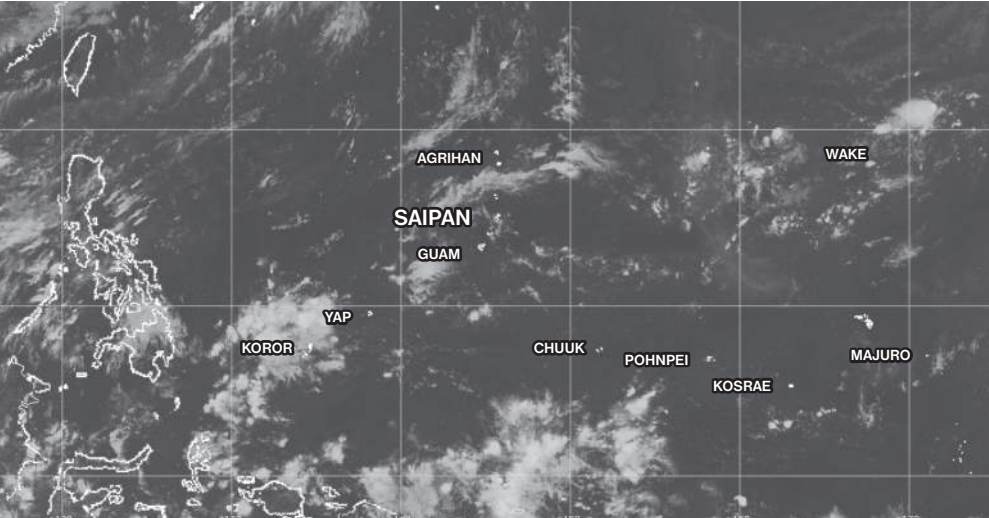
I mention all of the foregoing as constructive criticism in order to stimulate discussion among our people and leaders. We need to remember that we cannot be forever relying on Uncle Sam to provide federal grants for all our financial needs. We need to start being self-reliant. We should not continue relying on hand-outs from the federal government for all our needs.

To our elected and appointed leaders: you were elected to lead. So please do your job and lead—not react to others telling you what to do for fast money or for a quick buck. Your primary obligation is to improve the livelihood of our people. This requires a lot of hard work and a lot of planning and thinking. Remember that the CNMI government, as Finance has told us last week, is \$90 million in the hole. Your job is to get us out of this hole.

Jose S. Dela Cruz is a former justice of the CNMI Supreme Court.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
									
Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. east winds 5 to 10 mph.		Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms. southeast winds 5 to 10 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
88°	78°	88°	77°	88°	77°	88°	77°	89°	78°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:00 AM, SUNDAY, JULY 6, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A few showers are seen across the Marianas while thick cirrus clouds stream northward from heavy showers and thunderstorms that passed to the south of the region early this morning. More showers and thunderstorms are evident on satellite and radar well east of Guam, but they have shown signs of diminishing the past couple of hours.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/


STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

able, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors



CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp and, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

- ### Continue good hand hygiene

 - Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
 - Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

- ### Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

 - Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not avail-

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°	
Palau	Thunderstorm	84° / 76°	
Yap	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	87° / 79°	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	88° / 77°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	88° / 77°	
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Tuesday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Wednesday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:53 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:30 AM	7:55 PM
Tuesday	-	7:27 AM	8:44 PM
Wednesday	-	8:23 AM	9:30 PM
Thursday	-	9:15 AM	10:10 PM
Friday	-	10:05 AM	10:48 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	55° / 46°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	100° / 75°	
Hong Kong	Thunderstorm	90° / 84°	
Honolulu	Showers	86° / 75°	
London	Partly Cloudy	81° / 61°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	77° / 62°	
Manila	Thunderstorm	88° / 79°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	57° / 52°	
Miami	Thunderstorm	86° / 79°	
New York	Sunny	89° / 74°	
Osaka	Rain	82° / 73°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	84° / 64°	
Busan	Rain	73° / 70°	
Rome	Sunny	90° / 70°	
Salem	Thunderstorm	90° / 71°	
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	60° / 53°	
Seoul	Thunderstorm	84° / 70°	
Tokyo	Thunderstorm	82° / 77°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	91° / 76°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:37 AM	LOW TIDE	1.44	
7:15 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.10	
2:46 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.28	
9:58 PM	HIGH TIDE	2.07	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA				1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1301.2	8:30AM	9:00AM	Tues/Fri	1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Tues/Fri	1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable
3101.2	9:30AM	10:00AM	Tues/Fri				
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Tues/Fri				
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable	2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
GUAM TO ROTA				2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable	2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable	2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

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Business

The Tsubaki Tower

opens

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Tsubaki Tower is the first newly built hotel in Guam within the past four years.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Tsubaki Tower hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 1 to officially welcome guests in and to celebrate a new milestone in Guam's tourism history.

GUAM—Premier Hotel Group announced the opening of much anticipated The Tsubaki Tower in the northernmost point of famed Tumon Bay, overlooking a world-class marine preserve and nestled in a quiet lush corner of the island's tourism district. The Tsubaki Tower is Guam's newest resort, which offers 340 all-oceanview rooms and suites. With its enviable setting and upscale offerings, the resort combines an elevated level of luxury that is rooted in the island's unique 4,000-year-old culture.

The Tsubaki Tower hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 1 to officially welcome guests in and to celebrate a new milestone in Guam's tourism history. The Tsubaki Tower is the first newly

built hotel in Guam within the past four years.

The 27-story resort is perched at the highest point of Tumon Bay and nestled into five acres of lush greenery and mountainside. Each of The Tsubaki Tower's 340 rooms and suites faces the ocean and offers panoramic views of Guam's Pacific blue waters and vivid sunsets. From the higher floors, guests will be able to view famed Two Lovers Point to the north and the pristine Orote Point to the south. Two white-sandy beaches are within walking distance of the hotel—Tumon Bay, a world-class marine preserve, and historic Gun Beach, accessible by a nature trail.

Mitsuo "Mike" Sato, president of P.H.R. Ken Microne-

sia, Inc. noted to guests that The Tsubaki Tower aims to serve as a proud ambassador for Guam, encouraging the enjoyment of Guam's natural environment through discovery and exploration. The hotel aims to provide its guests with authentic and unique moments of Discovery, Belonging, Wonder, and Serenity which is part of The Tsubaki Journey. Visitors can look forward to experiencing the island's alluring heritage

throughout their stay.

Sato added, "From the conceptual stage, The Tsubaki Tower was designed to honor the island's unique culture and sense of place. We incorporated into the design natural textures, language, and the flavors inspired by Guam's nature and history, a first of its kind for the island. We wanted to show our commitment to Guam, by including its essence in the littlest details."

The Tsubaki Tower offers

» Guam's newest resort overlooks Tumon Bay

the largest standard rooms on Guam. The standard rooms start at 45 square meters (484 sq. ft.) with an additional 13 square meters (140 sq. ft.) of balcony space. The resort also features two types of dining, three bars, lobby lounge, 24-hour deli, takeout cafe, in-room dining services with special menus created specifically to enjoy on the expansive balconies that serve as additional rooms to lounge and dine.

The Tsubaki Tower's style has been inspired by the power of nature. The hotel contemporary luxury reflects Guam's

distinctive tropical landscapes and cosmopolitan atmosphere with natural textures and tones throughout.

Sato noted, "We are very proud of our newest property in Guam and have been looking forward to welcoming guests to enjoy The Tsubaki Journey. We spent that last six years planning how every detail will include the warmth of Guam's Håfa Adai spirit. Everyone will enjoy this new Guam experience, one that offers an appreciation of nature, a sense of serenity, and unrivaled service."

When guests are ready to venture out, The Tsubaki Tower is a short walk from the center of Tumon Bay, where many shopping and dining options are available.

The resort is currently offering special opening packages, and room reservations can be made through the resort's website (tsubakitower.premierhotel-group.com/guam/). Dining reservations for Casa Oceano, the resort's all-day dining restaurant, can be made by calling (671) 969-5200 or by email at fbreservations@thetsubakitower.com. As part of its opening special, The Tsubaki Tower is welcoming PHR Club members (Premier Hotel & Restaurants Club) to enjoy a 20 percent discount at its food and beverage outlets.

Connect with The Tsubaki team on Facebook and Instagram (@thetsubakitower) for the latest updates. (PR)

United Airlines adds nearly 25K flights in August

CHICAGO—United Airlines announced it is tripling the size of its August schedule compared to its June 2020 schedule, adding nearly 25,000 domestic and international flights compared to July 2020, and plans to fly 40% of its overall schedule in August, as compared to August 2019. While travel demand remains a fraction of what it was at the end of 2019, customers are slowly returning to flying with a preference for leisure destinations, trips to reunite with friends and family, and getaways to places that encourage social distancing. According to TSA, more than 600,000 passengers passed through

airport security checkpoints on Monday, June 29, the first time since March 19 that those numbers exceeded 25% of pre-COVID levels.

United has overhauled its cleaning and safety procedures under United Clean-Plus and is giving customers more flexibility when booking by extending its waiver of change fees and award re-deposit fees for reservations through July 31.

United plans to add more than 350 daily flights from its U.S. hubs in August, including doubling the number of flights from New York/Newark compared to July. This increase includes more flights to mountain and na-

tional park destinations like Aspen, Colorado; Bangor, Maine; Bozeman, Montana; and Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Internationally, United's August schedule will include a return to Tahiti and additional flights to Hawaii, the Caribbean and Mexico. Across the Atlantic, United will add more flights and options to Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Munich, Paris and Zurich.

"We're taking the same data-driven, realistic approach to growing our schedule as we did in drawing it down at the start of the pandemic," said Ankit Gupta, United's vice president of Domestic Network Planning. "Demand is coming back slowly and

we're building in enough capacity to stay ahead of the number of people traveling. And we're adding in flights to places we know customers want to travel to, like outdoor recreation destinations where social distancing is easier but doing so in a way that's flexible and allows us to adjust should that demand change."

US domestic

Domestically, United plans to fly 48% of its 2019 schedule in August compared to 2019 levels, up from 30% in July. Travelers in search of more socially distant vacation options like beach, mountain and national park destinations will see more opportunities

for leisure travel in United's August schedule. Highlights include:

- Adding more than 600 daily flights to more than 200 airports across the United States, including the resumption of 50 routes from July to August.
- Expanding flights at 147 airports across the United States.
- Increasing connectivity in United's mid-continental hubs, including Chicago, Denver and Houston.
- Doubling the number of flights from New York/Newark
- Returning around 90 aircraft back into service, in-

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Nation

FOR NATION'S BIRTHDAY

Trump slams his enemies within



President Donald Trump speaks during a "Salute to America" event on the South Lawn of the White House, Saturday, July 4, 2020, in Washington. AP

WASHINGTON (AP)—On a day meant for unity and celebration, President Donald Trump vowed to "safeguard our values" from enemies within — leftists, looters, agitators, he said — in a Fourth of July speech packed with all the grievances and combativeness of his political rallies.

Trump watched paratroopers float to the ground in a tribute to America, greeted his audience of front-line medical workers and others central in responding to the coronavirus pandemic, and opened up on those who "slander" him and disrespect the country's past.

"We are now in the process of defeating the radical left, the anarchists, the agitators, the looters, and the people who, in many instances, have absolutely no clue what they are doing," he said. "We will never allow an angry mob to tear down our statues, erase our history, indoctrinate our children.

"And we will defend, protect and preserve (the) American way of life, which began in 1492 when Columbus discovered America."

He did not mention the dead from the pandemic. Nearly 130,000 are known to have died from COVID-19 in the U.S.

Even as officials across the country pleaded with Americans to curb their enthusiasm for large Fourth of July crowds, Trump enticed the masses with a "special evening" of tribute and fireworks staged with new U.S. coronavirus infections on the rise.

But the crowds wandering the National Mall for the night's air show and fireworks were strikingly thin-

ner than the gathering for last year's jammed celebration on the Mall.

Many who showed up wore masks, unlike those seated close together for Trump's South Lawn event, and distancing was easy to do for those scattered across the sprawling space.

Trump did not hesitate to use the country's birthday as an occasion to assail segments

of the country that do not support him.

Carrying on a theme he pounded on a day earlier against the backdrop of the Mount Rushmore monuments, he went after those who have torn down statues or think some of them, particularly those of Confederate figures, should be removed. Support has been growing among Republicans to remove

Confederate memorials.

"Our past is not a burden to be cast away," Trump said.

Outside the event but as close to it as they could get, Pat Lee of Upper Dublin, Pennsylvania, gathered with two friends, one of them a nurse from Fredericksburg, Virginia, and none in a mask.

"POTUS said it would go away," Lee said of the pandemic, using an acronym for

president of the United States.

"Masks, I think, are like a hoax," But she said she wore one inside the Trump International Hotel, where she stayed.

By the World War II Memorial, the National Park Service handed out packets of five white cloth masks to all who wanted them. People were not required to wear them.

Another nurse, Zippy Watt from Riverside, California,

came to see the air show and fireworks with her husband and their two daughters, one of whom lives in Washington. They wore matching American flag face masks even when seated together on a park bench.

"We chose to wear a mask to protect ourselves and others," Watt said. She said her family was divided on Trump but she is "more of a Trump supporter. Being from southern California I see socialist tendencies. I'm tired of paying taxes so others can stay home."

Pat Lee made the trip from north of Philadelphia after seeing last year's Mall celebration on TV.

She said the protests over racial injustice that unfolded near her were so threatening that people in her suburban neighborhood took turns staying up all night and those who didn't own guns stationed bats and shovels in their garages. Her friend from Pennsylvania, who didn't want to be identified, said she spent more than three hours in line to buy a gun.

"I want people to stop calling us racists," Lee said. "We're not racists. Just because you love your country, love the people in your country, doesn't make you a racist."

Trump's guests on the South Lawn were doctors, nurses, law enforcement officers and military members as well as officials from the administration, said Judd Deere, deputy White House press secretary. He said the event was a tribute to the "tremendous courage and spirit" of front-line workers and the public in the pandemic.

UNITED

From Page 11

cluding adding more CRJ-550 service between New York/Newark and St. Louis; Indianapolis; Richmond, Virginia; Cincinnati; Norfolk, Virginia; and Columbus, Ohio.

■ Increasing service between Hawaii and its hubs in Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles and San Francisco

■ Resuming service to more Hawaiian destinations, including Lihue from San Francisco and Hilo from Los Angeles.

International

"United's international schedule continues to be guided by customer demand as we add back capacity in regions with relative strength," said Patrick Quayle, United's vice president of International Network and Alliances. "For August, we've seen increasing demand for leisure travel and have

added options to places like Cancun and reinstated service to Tahiti. Additionally, we are further building out service to partner hubs like Frankfurt and Zurich, where customers can connect on to a wide array of destinations."

Atlantic

Internationally, United is scheduled to fly 25% of its schedule in August, up from 16% in July. Across the Atlantic, United plans to offer customers more opportunities to get to Europe and beyond, with more flying from Chicago, New York/Newark and San Francisco. Highlights include:

■ Resuming service between Chicago and Brussels and Frankfurt.

■ Resuming service between New York/Newark and Brussels, Munich and Zurich.

■ Resuming service between San Francisco and London.

Upon government approval,

United will restart daily service between Delhi and San Francisco and New York/Newark. Pacific

Across the Pacific in August, United is scheduled to restart three-times-weekly service connecting the mainland United States and Tahiti. In July, United made several changes to its Asia Pacific schedule. Highlights of United's service include:

■ Starting new service, five times weekly, between Chicago and Tokyo's Haneda Airport. United will continue operating daily service to Tokyo Narita from New York/Newark and San Francisco.

■ Resuming service between Hong Kong and San Francisco five days a week, with service continuing to Singapore.

■ Resuming service to Seoul, South Korea three days a week.

■ Resuming service to Shanghai from San Francisco

two days a week.

Latin America/Caribbean

Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, United is expanding across each region with a total of 35 new routes for August. Highlights of United's schedule include:

■ Resuming service between Houston and Lima.

■ Resuming service between New York/Newark and Sao Paulo.

■ Resuming service between Mexico City and Chicago, New York/Newark and San Francisco.

■ Adding more ways to get to Cancun from Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York/Newark and San Francisco.

■ Resuming service to San Salvador and Guatemala City from Houston, New York/Newark, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

■ Increasing the number of flights between Houston and

Mexico City, Cancun, Guadalajara and Leon in Mexico; Panama City, Panama.

■ Increasing the number of flights between New York/Newark and Punta Cana, Santiago and Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.

Committed to Ensuring a Safe Journey

United is committed to putting health and safety at the forefront of every customer's journey, with the goal of delivering an industry-leading standard of cleanliness through its United CleanPlus program. United has teamed up with Clorox and Cleveland Clinic to redefine cleaning and health safety procedures from check-in to landing and has implemented more than a dozen new policies, protocols and innovations designed with the safety of customers and employees in mind, including:

■ Requiring all travelers — including crew members — to wear face coverings and po-

tentially revoking travel privileges for customers who do not follow these requirements, as underscored in a recent video from United CEO, Scott Kirby.

■ Using state-of-the-art high-efficiency (HEPA) filters on United aircraft to circulate air and remove up to 99.97% of airborne particles.

■ Using electrostatic spraying on all mainline aircraft before departure for enhanced cabin sanitation.

■ Adding a step to the check-in process, based on a recommendation from the Cleveland Clinic, requiring customers to acknowledge they do not have symptoms for COVID-19 and agree to follow our policies, including wearing a mask on board.

■ Offering customers a touchless baggage check-in experience at more than 200 airports across the United States; United is the first and only U.S. airline to make this technology available. (PR)

World

English pubs reopen but little normal elsewhere in the world

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—Pubs, hair salons and movie theaters across England reopened Saturday as part of Britain's biggest step toward post-outbreak normal, while South Africa and other parts of the world signaled anything but — reporting another day of record confirmed coronavirus cases.

Many people relished the easing of restrictions on public life that had shuttered U.K. restaurants and bars, although a trade group estimated that only about half of England's pubs elected to open on the first possible day. The ones that decided to start pouring at the earliest hour allowed — 6 a.m.—had customers to serve.

"Let's not blow it now," British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said as some in England rushed to restaurants or barbers for the first time in

more than three months.

Critics pointed to the experience elsewhere in Europe and in some U.S. states, where the reopening of bars and restaurants is blamed for a spike in infections from patrons losing their inhibitions among strangers and abandoning social distancing after imbibing a few drinks.

Reinforcing the concern the British government had been too hasty: the World Health Organization said its member nations reported more than 212,000 new COVID-19 cases to the U.N. health agency Saturday, the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic. WHO said more than half of the new confirmed infections were reported from the Americas region, which includes Brazil and the United States.

In the U.S., where many Fourth of July parades and fire-

works displays were canceled because of the virus, health authorities warned that Independence Day would be a crucial test of Americans' self-control. Confirmed cases are climbing in 40 states, and the U.S. on Saturday reported more than 50,000 new cases nationwide.

More than 11.1 million people around the world are known to have been infected with the virus, 2.8 million of them in the U.S., according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. With shortages of testing materials, the real number of cases is unknown. More than 527,000 people have died in the pandemic, according to the Johns Hopkins data.

In South Africa, a growing hot spot as the pandemic picks up speed in parts of Africa, confirmed cases have climbed to more than 177,000, with a record 9,063 reported in the

most recent 24-hour period.

If Africa's most developed country is struggling to manage the pandemic, that's ominous for less-prepared African nations. Confirmed cases across the 54-nation continent are now above 433,000.

India also reported its highest single-day spike, with 22,771 new confirmed cases for a total of more than 648,000, including 18,655 deaths.

Russia marked a milestone as the death toll rose above 10,000. The national coronavirus task force also reported 6,632 new infections, raising the total for the outbreak

to 674,515.

Russia's caseload is the world's third largest behind the United States and Brazil, but its reported deaths are lower than many other countries. Officials have denied speculation that the figures are being manipulated.

Elsewhere, authorities targeted communities for special measures as virus clusters emerged.

Australia's Victoria state locked down nine public housing towers and three more Melbourne suburbs after 108 new cases. Premier Daniel Andrews said 3,000 people in the towers will go into "hard

lockdown," meaning "there will be no one allowed in ... and no one allowed out."

Authorities in northeast Spain ordered the lockdown of El Segrià county around the city of Lleida, home to over 200,000 people, after health officials recorded a jump in 60 cases in 24 hours. The outbreaks are linked to agricultural workers in the rural area.

And Tokyo confirmed 131 new cases, exceeding 100 for the third day in a row and hitting a new two-month high, prompting Governor Yuriko Koike to ask residents to avoid nonessential out-of-town visits.

PH president signs widely opposed anti-terror law

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine president on Friday signed a widely opposed anti-terror law which critics fear could be used against human rights defenders and to muzzle dissent.

President Rodrigo Duterte signed the Anti-Terrorism Act after weighing the concerns of different groups, demonstrating the government's commitment to stamping out terrorism, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said.

Opponents say they will question the constitutionality of the law in the Supreme Court.

The law, which Congress sent to the president for sign-

ing last month, allows the detention of suspects for up to 24 days without charge and empowers a government anti-terrorism council to designate suspects or groups as suspected terrorists who could then be subject to arrest and surveillance.

Military officials have cited the threat of terrorism, including from Islamic State group-linked Abu Sayyaf militants in the southern Philippines, as a reason why the country needs the law. It replaces a 2007 anti-terror law called the Human Security Act that has been rarely used, largely because law enforcers can be fined 500,000 pesos (\$9,800)

for each day they wrongfully detain a terrorism suspect.

Lawmakers removed such safeguards in the new legislation, which increases the number of days that suspects can be detained without warrants from three to 24.

Opposition to the law has been mounting, with Catholic bishops saying the definition of terrorism under the law is so broad it could threaten legitimate dissent and civil liberties. The Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the largest group of lawyers in the country, and U.N. rights officials have also expressed concern along with nationalist groups and media watchdogs.

Japan floods leave some 20 dead, many in nursing homes

TOKYO (AP)—Deep floodwaters and the risk of more mudslides that left about 20 people confirmed or presumed dead hampered search and rescue operations on Sunday in southern Japan, including at elderly home facilities where more than a dozen perished and scores are still stranded.

Rescue helicopters plucked more people from their homes in the Kumamoto region. Up to 10,000 defense troops, the coast guard and fire brigades are taking part in the operation.

Large areas along the Kuma River were swallowed by floodwaters with many houses, buildings and vehicles submerged almost up to their roofs. Mudslides smashed into houses, sending people atop rooftops waiving at rescuers.

At a flooded elderly care home in Kuma Village, 14

residents were presumed dead after rescuers reached them on Saturday, officials said. Three others had hypothermia.

The rescue continued Sunday for dozens of other residents and caregivers who were still at the riverside care facility Senjuen, where about 60 people were trapped when floodwaters and mud gushed in, officials said.

In Hitoyoshi City, the deluge poured into houses near the main train station. "The water rose to the second floor so fast and I just couldn't stop shivering," a 55-year-old woman who was visiting her relatives told the Asahi newspaper.

She and her relatives ran upstairs, swam out of the window and eventually took refuge on the roof to wait for their rescue.

More than 75,000 residents


in the prefectures of Kumamoto and Kagoshima were urged to evacuate following pounding rains on Friday evening and into Saturday. The evacuation was not mandatory and many people opted to stay home because of concerns over catching the coronavirus, even though officials say shelters are adequately equipped with partitions and other safety measures.

Flooding also cut off power and communication lines, further delaying the search and rescue. Nearly 6,000 homes in Kumamoto were still without electricity Sunday, according to the Kyushu Electric Power Co.

The rainfall that exceeded 100 millimeters (4 inches) per hour has since subsided but the Japan Meteorological Agency has kept mudslide warnings in place across Kumamoto.

FROM THIS LIFE TO MY ETERNAL LIFE
"I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7

In Loving Memory



Jerold F. Facey
 Affectionately known as "Jerry"
 Formerly of Saipan, Army Veteran, and a life-long resident of Micronesia,
 passed away peacefully on June 28, 2020
 at his home in Gilbert, Arizona with family at his side; he was 81.

Jerry is preceded in death by his
Parents: John A. Facey and Elizabeth Crowell
Parents-in-law: Demei Andres and Bartol Rengulbai
Adopted Palau Family: Don and Maria Pedro

His beautiful life will be cherished forever in the lives of his
Wife: Irene Andres Facey

Children: John-Paul, Jerene, and Jeanette Facey; and, Griffin (Reared);
Grandchildren: Amara and Liliana Ward; Jiada, Juliet, and Julius Kim; Bilanz and John Facey.
He is also survived by a brother and sister-in-law; nieces, nephews, and numerous other relatives and friends who loved Jerry very much.

IN SAIPAN:
 Daily Mass for the repose of his soul is being offered at Kristo Rai Church,
 at 6:00 a.m. until Thursday, July 9th. On Friday, July 17th, a memorial mass will be
 held at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral at 5:30 p.m.

IN GILBERT, ARIZONA:
 The family will receive friends at a visitation on Tuesday, July 7th from 5:00 p.m. to
 6:00 p.m. at Wyman's Mortuary, 115 S Country Club Dr., Mesa, AZ 85210.
 Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 8th
 at St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church, 440 E Elliot Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85234.
 Burial will be in Palau at a later date to be determined due to COVID-19 restrictions.
*The family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love,
 concern, and kindness extended to them during their time of bereavement.
 May God bless and keep you.*

Thank You, Ke Kmal Mesaul, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghillisow and Salamat po.
Irene, John-Paul, Jerene, and Jeanette Facey

Health & Wellness

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is sponsored by



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Foundation



HEIDI DE MARCO/KAISER HEALTH NEWS/TNS

Art Ballard works a 25-pound plate on the leg press. "At my age, the best thing you can do is find a routine."

'More than physical health': Gym helps 91-year-old battle isolation

By HEIDI DE MARCO
KAISER HEALTH NEWS/TNS

Most mornings, like clockwork, you could find Art Ballard pumping iron.

At least five days a week, he drove to Foothill Gym, where he beat on the punching bag, rode a stationary bike

casual Tylenol for aches and pains. "Doctors love me," he said.

But when California enacted a statewide stay-at-home order in mid-March, his near-daily physical exercise and social interactions abruptly ended.

Ballard's health started to deteriorate: His back hurt, his legs cramped and he started becoming short of breath. As happens too often with

California's Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research conducted an analysis in late March, as the coronavirus established a foothold in the U.S., that found that older adults over 60 who lived alone were more likely to report feeling anxious or depressed than those living with companions.

The combination of the pandemic and nationwide lockdown orders put this already vulnerable population at greater risk, said Julie Zissimopoulos, co-director of the aging and cognition program at USC's Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics. Social distancing measures have weakened the support systems that older people who live alone depend on for basic activities, such as help with grocery shopping and transportation to doctor appointments.

"There's a huge, disproportionate impact on older adults with this virus and the health outcomes," said Lisa Marsh Ryerson, president of AARP Foundation. "During this shutdown, we've had growing public health and community acknowledgement of how serious it can be to sever the ties with our network."

Ballard, a retired jeweler, lives alone in a one-bedroom condo in Monrovia, a city of about 36,000 people about 20 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles. He lost his wife of more than 50 years, Dorothy, to Alzheimer's disease in 2015. Since then, he has embraced his solitude

and worked his abs. After he joined the gym five years ago, he dropped 20 pounds, improved his balance and made friends.

At 91, he's still spry and doesn't take any medication other than an oc-

casional Tylenol for aches and pains.

and reveled in his newfound bachelorhood. He enjoys cooking and trying out recipes, listening to 1950s music and watching YouTube videos about World War II.

He has a girlfriend he met online—a retired greyhound trainer who lives in Arkansas. They haven't yet met in person.

Ballard felt he could handle the isolation of the lockdown order. He didn't have visitors during quarantine, but his son, Dan Ballard, checked on him by phone weekly.

In the beginning, Ballard tried to keep busy. He did his shopping early in the morning and took strolls around his neighborhood. But after a couple of months of not visiting the gym, Ballard began feeling sad and frustrated, and his health started to slide. He relied more on his walker and sometimes struggled to breathe.

"My girlfriend was concerned with how I was thinking," said Ballard, who speaks to her on the phone several times a day.

For Ballard, a self-proclaimed gym

so he decided to visit Brian Whelan, the owner of the small, family-run gym, in late May.

"He comes in, out of breath, with a walker," Whelan recalled. "He couldn't hold his head up straight and it took him five minutes to catch his breath."

Whelan felt sad and angry. "Everyone here was almost in tears because this vibrant man was gone," he said. So Whelan broke the rules. He invited Ballard to visit the gym even before it officially reopened to the public.

"The gym business is more than physical health," said Whelan. "It's mental health."

Ballard resumed his beloved routine the last week of May, with the gym mostly to himself.

"Every day for the past two months, I've been sad," Ballard said on the first day back. "Today, I woke up and I was happy."

Day after day, Ballard improved. "Now he comes in without a walker, head up straight, and the spark in his



HEIDI DE MARCO/KAISER HEALTH NEWS/TNS

Art Ballard performs seated cable pulls during his total body workout at the gym. "I try to get my heart rate up to 140," Ballard says.



HEIDI DE MARCO/KAISER HEALTH NEWS/TNS

Art Ballard says it took him a while to get his hands on a mask. He wears it when he goes grocery shopping and to doctor appointments.

addict, Foothill Gym was a second home. Just as in the 1980s sitcom "Cheers," it's a place where everybody knows his name. Not going to the "club," as he calls it, was taking a toll on his mental and physical health,

eyes is getting brighter," Whelan said.

The gym reopened June 15. Despite the threat of COVID-19, Ballard is back to working out six days a week. Masks are required to enter the gym but can be removed when exercising.

Ballard isn't worried. "I'm 100% comfortable," he said. "I'll wear a mask if they ask me to."

Son Dan said he's worried about his dad being around people, but realizes the benefits.

"It's a scary balance. If he stops going to the gym and can't see anybody, I know he's going to deteriorate," he said. "At the end of the day, it's a quality-of-life decision that's his to make."

Ballard believes not being able to socialize was a bigger threat to his health than the risk of contracting the coronavirus.

"I found out how important my routine and exercise is," said Ballard. "It's given me back my life. And it's only going to get better."

Kaiser Health News (KHN) is a national health policy news service. It is an editorially independent program of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.



HEIDI DE MARCO/KAISER HEALTH NEWS/TNS

Art Ballard lives alone in a one-bedroom apartment. He's self-sufficient and says he wants to live independently as long as possible. More than one-quarter of adults 65 and older live by themselves, according to 2018 U.S. Census Bureau statistics.

Life & Style

Christina Ricci

files for divorce from husband of 7 years

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Actress Christina Ricci has filed for divorce Thursday from her husband of seven years, and is asking for sole custody of their son.

Ricci filed documents in Los Angeles County Superior Court to dissolve her mar-

riage with James Heerdegen, citing irreconcilable differences.

The documents say that Ricci wants sole legal and physical custody of their 5-year-old



Ricci

son Freddie.

Ricci met Heerdegen, a camera operator for films and television, on the set of her short-lived TV series "Pan Am" in 2011. They started dating the

following year, and married in 2013.

Ricci is best known for her childhood work in hit films including "Casper" and "The Addams Family," and for her adult appearances in indie films including "Black Snake Moan" and "Buffalo 66."

Coronavirus concerns freeze Vanilla Ice show

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Vanilla Ice cooled off plans for a concert in Texas after taking considerable heat for an event that sought to gather hundreds of fans in one of the nation's coronavirus hot spots.

The 1990s rapper with the hit single "Ice Ice Baby" had been scheduled to play a lake-side show just outside Austin on Friday, but on Thursday he announced it was being postponed.

"Due to the increase in COVID-19 numbers in Austin

we're gonna move the concert to a better date," Vanilla Ice tweeted. "We were hoping for better Coronavirus numbers by July but Unfortunately the numbers have increased quite a bit so for the safety and health of everyone we're going to stay home."

Barrett Brannam, who owns the venue where Vanilla Ice had been scheduled to play, said the performer—real name Robert Van Winkle—had expressed concern about

the health of his fans and himself. Brannam said Saturday's planned appearance by 1990s R&B group Color Me Badd also was postponed. He said both Vanilla Ice and Color Me Badd would perform at a later date, but he didn't know when.

"Hard to say. Could be later this summer or not until next summer. We don't know how long this virus will be around," he said.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott last week shut down bars and clubs

in an effort to halt what he called a "massive spread" of the coronavirus. But the Emerald Point Bar & Grill is still open and hosting live music because it is a restaurant and performances can take place outside.

The Vanilla Ice show drew widespread attention—and criticism—when the rapper posted about it on social media Wednesday. Only 84 tickets had been sold before the online ticket broker suspended sales, Brannam said.

Prince Royce gets a wake-up call with COVID-19

NEW YORK (AP)—Bachata singer Prince Royce says he got a wake-up call with a COVID-19 diagnosis and now he wants to try and wake others too.

Royce revealed that he is recovering from the virus in an interview with The Associated Press on Thursday.

Royce, 31, said he decided to speak up out of a growing frustration with seeing

people going out and gathering without masks—even while cases are spiking in several states. And like many, he is worried that more people will get infected over the Fourth of July weekend.

"At first, I was very scared, like 'Nobody can find out, I



Royce

shouldn't tell anybody.' But I felt that I have a duty to tell my communities, you know. I live in Florida, I'm from New York, I have a place in California. And I'm seeing what's happening across the country. I see what's happening in the

world," said Royce via Zoom from his home in Miami.

For him, it all started about two weeks ago on a Sunday, when he woke in the middle of the night not feeling well after spending the day at the pool making TikTok videos and battling a "really bad headache." But he attributed it to a day in the sun and the cold AC, and went back to sleep.

Reps: Singers Kacey Musgraves, Ruston Kelly file for divorce

NEW YORK (AP)—Grammy-winning singer Kacey Musgraves and her musician-husband, Ruston Kelly, have filed for divorce.

Representatives for both singers confirmed the news Friday to The Associated Press. In a joint statement, Musgraves and Kelly said "we've made this painful decision together."

"With heavy but hopeful hearts we wanted to put our own thoughts into the air about what's happening. These kinds of announcements are always met with scrutiny and speculation and we want to stop that before it even starts. We believe that we were put into each other's lives for a divine reason

and have both changed each other infinitely for the better. The love we have for each other goes far beyond the relationship we've shared as husband and wife. It's a soul connection that can never be erased," the emailed statement read.

"We've made this painful decision together—a healthy decision that comes after a very long period of trying the best we can. It simply just didn't work. Though we are parting ways in marriage, we will remain true friends for the rest of our lives. We hold no blame, anger, or contempt for each other and we ask for privacy and positive wishes for us both as we learn how to navigate through this," the statement continued.

UK judge rejects tabloid's bid to throw out Depp libel suit

LONDON (AP)—A British judge on Thursday rejected an attempt by tabloid newspaper The Sun to quash a libel suit from actor Johnny Depp over an article claiming he abused ex-wife Amber Heard.



Depp

Judge Andrew Nicol said "in my view it would not be just to strike out the claim."

The ruling means the two celebrities and their large legal teams will square off next week at the High Court in London.

Depp, 57, and Heard, 34, met on the set of the 2011 comedy "The Rum Diary" and married

in Los Angeles in February 2015. They divorced in 2017.

Depp is suing The Sun's publisher, News Group Newspapers, and Executive Editor Dan Wootton over a 2018 article claiming the actor was violent and abusive to Heard. He strongly denies the allegations.

The Sun's lawyers applied for the case to be dismissed on the grounds that Depp failed to disclose text messages he exchanged with an assistant showing that he tried to buy "MDMA and other narcotics" while he was in Australia with Heard in 2015.

Ex-wife balks at inviting other woman to son's graduation

DEAR ABBY: My husband of nearly 22 years and I divorced last year after he told me he didn't want to be married anymore and didn't know if he ever loved me. Since our split, he has bought a home with another woman—the same woman I suspected him of having an affair with, and the same woman he encouraged me to befriend during our marriage. (I even took her on a trip to Europe.)

Our son is graduating from high school. We are planning a belated, socially distanced graduation party for my son, and my ex wants to bring her. My challenge is that I am with someone new as well, but he is someone who came into my life a couple of months after my ex and I separated. I want him to be at the party, but I don't want her there. I feel our circumstances are quite different.

My son is my priority, so I am leaning toward asking my new significant other not to attend, and then asking that she not attend either. I'm still hurt by their actions. What is the protocol here, and what should I do?

PROUD MOM MOVING ON

DEAR MOM: I understand your hurt feelings, but, as you wrote, the party is a celebration of your son's achievement and nothing else. If things turn out as it appears they will, your ex may marry this woman, and she would be to some extent in your life when your son marries, starts a family, etc. (Sorry!)

The saving grace through all of this is you have a new partner in your life who can help buffer you. Fortunately, you will be social distancing, so you won't have to spend much time in her space. While you don't have to welcome this woman with open arms, please observe the social niceties and devote the majority of your time to mingling with the other guests.

DEAR ABBY: I met a man many years ago. Shortly afterward, my husband passed away. I was in a tough spot, and this man came to my rescue. He offered me a place to live, but I refused. After a few months, I started receiving love letters from him. I carefully answered them, telling him I had gotten involved with someone else, but if it didn't work out, I might consider dating him.

After about a month, he began showing up at my house. By then I was living with my new man, "Roger." I explained I was in love and he should leave, but he still showed up at my house every couple of months.

I was with Roger for 11 years, but after a battle with heart problems, he died. This man showed up while Roger was in a coma. I told him with much anger several times to please stop coming to my house.

Two days after Roger's death, he again showed up. He asked if it was OK to take me on a date now, and I lost it. I ordered him to never come to my door again and told him I would never date him. He has started sending me love letters again. I

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



don't answer them. He still calls or sends angry letters and still comes by asking if I would like to go on a date. Help!

FED UP IN WASHINGTON

DEAR FED UP: If you have a lawyer, have him/her write the man a formal letter telling him you have tried to politely discourage his attentions and that if he persists in harassing you, he will be reported to the police as a stalker. Then follow through by filing a report with the authorities.

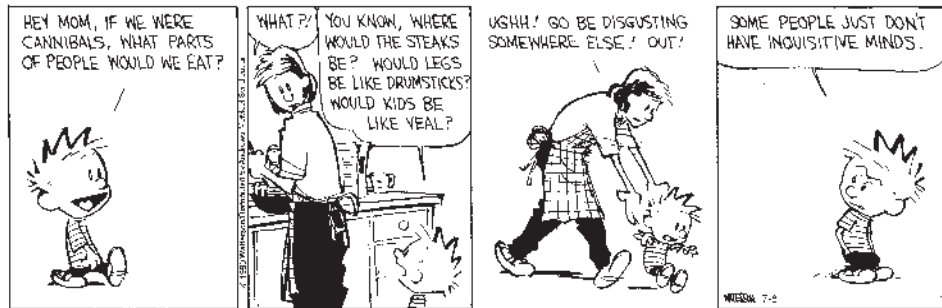
P.S. If your home is not equipped with a security system, consider installing one. He is creepy.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby - Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

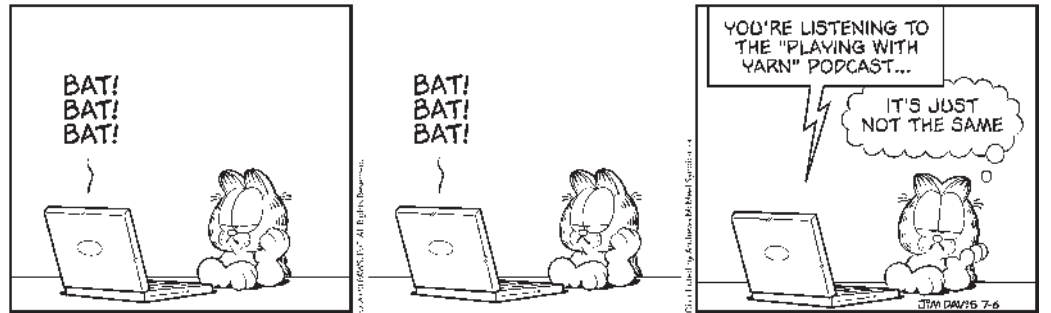
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



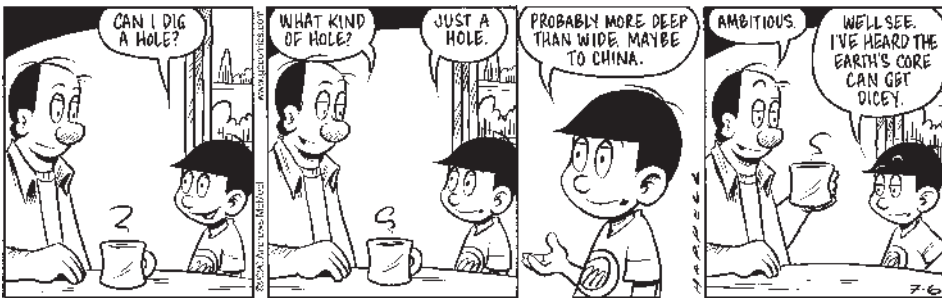
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 British "Inc." 4 \$ dispenser 7 Jog 11 "Cat on — Tin Roof" 13 Large snake 14 Theater award 15 "Downton Abbey" countess 16 Mess up 17 Cleopatra's river 18 Delicious 20 Actor Morales 22 Silent 24 Manage, in slang 28 Pond floater 32 Sub detector 33 Caesar's "vidi" 34 Police officer 36 Theater box 37 TV trophies 39 Hammer's place

DOWN

1 Like some 2 Grand 3 Campus digs 4 Copper head? 5 Ripped 6 Swamp 7 "The Sixth Sense" actress 8 MLB stat 9 Peanut product 10 Casual shirt 12 "Stand by Your Man" singer 19 "Uh-huh" 21 Small batteries 23 Buddy 25 Handle 26 Shakepeare villain 27 Dreaded dino 28 Fibs 29 "Woe —!" 30 Tibetan monk 31 Speck 35 Luau bowlful 38 High school subj. 40 Approves 42 Go in 45 Billions of years 47 Melville's obsessed captain 48 Roman emperor 49 Emmy-winning Tyne 50 Diner order 51 Carnival city 52 PC key 54 Animal doc

Solution time: 26 mins.

M	A	S	O	N	D	E	W	O	J	E
P	R	A	C	O	E	V	A	M	C	S
H	A	R	E	M	S	A	N	D	A	L
O	R	D	A	I	N	R	H	E	A	
S	S	N	E	N	G	B	E	A	D	
R	A	G	S	A	N	I	T	A		
S	Y	S	T	E	M	R	L	M	B	L
A	D	E	L	E	S	I	A	M		
A	P	O	R	T	E	N	E	K	I	T
N	A	R	C	S	T	E	F	F	I	
S	U	N	H	A	T	S	R	A	N	D
E	L	O	H	O	G	O	R	I	C	N
L	O	T	I	W	O	N	O	S	E	D

Last Friday's Answer 07/06

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Hart, 41; Tia Mowry, 42; Tamera Mowry, 42; Sylvester Stallone, 74.

Happy Birthday: Tidy up loose ends. Make use of the time you have to assess your life and to make adjustments that will encourage you to eliminate whatever isn't working for you. Putting more time and effort into the people and projects that make you happy will ensure you move forward with less stress and a greater appreciation for life, love and enlightenment. Your numbers are 6, 14, 21, 23, 31, 39, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Be cautious about how you deal with others. An emotional incident can spin out of control, making your home environment stressful. Put your energy into self-improvement, not trying to change others. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Come up with an idea and follow through. You can get what you want if you adapt to and use what's available. An overdue change will turn out better than you thought possible. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Stick to what works; if you venture too far from practical, you will end up backtracking -- at a price. Be willing to do the work yourself. If you count on someone else, you will be disappointed in the results. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Express your feelings, discuss your position and make plans and adjustments that encourage a better relationship with those you share expenses or space with. Honesty and moderation

will help bring about positive change. Live by the rules. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Listen carefully. Don't feel compelled to run the show or agree to a change that doesn't suit your needs, and you'll find it easier to get along with others. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Handle financial, contractual and health issues personally. Joint ventures will lead to a stressful situation. Make adjustments that will put you in a better position to do things your way. Money and emotions won't mix. You cannot buy love or trust. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Speed things up in order to finish what you start. Don't give anyone a reason to complain or a chance to put demands on you or your time. Reward yourself with something that lifts your spirits or enhances the way you look. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Someone you least expect will point you in the direction of an opportunity. Check it out, and verify the cost involved before you sign up. An unexpected offer will have guidelines you will have to fulfill before you receive any assets or possessions. **

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Keep up with the times. A virtual reunion with old friends will pique your interest. Physical improvements will boost your ego and put you in the right frame of mind to face the past. Romance is on the rise. ****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Feel out a situation at home before you begin to make adjustments to the way you live. Someone may not be as eager to make the changes you want to implement. Charm, along with an incentive, will work better than harsh words. ***



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Make changes to the way you live, how you look and the people you associate with, and you will feel better about who you are and what you do. Don't follow someone if it isn't what you want. ***



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Consider the trends, and you'll discover how to turn a negative into a positive. Look for something that your community is in dire need of, and find a way to offer it for a fair price. Use your imagination. ***

Birthday Baby: You are astute, disciplined and strong-willed. You are insightful and retentive.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

4		8		3			6	
			5	1			3	4
7	1	3	2				8	
	8	7						
6				8				5
						6	2	
	7				6	8	9	2
8		6		3	1			
	2			1		4		6

Difficulty Level ★

7/06

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

2	5	7	6	4	9	3	8	1
6	8	9	5	1	3	2	4	7
3	1	4	2	7	8	5	6	9
4	3	2	8	9	1	7	5	6
5	6	8	7	2	4	1	9	3
9	7	1	3	5	6	4	2	8
7	4	6	1	8	5	9	3	2
1	9	3	4	6	2	8	7	5
8	2	5	9	3	7	6	1	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

COZY ROBES

Solution: 5 letters

E L H A T E E H C L E T S A P
G Z E C E E L F O T W O O L E
N F I N K F L U F F Y A I T L
U A R L N E L F F A W N H U Y
O B N O A A T S E R O I X S T
L R W O L N L G E I N U A E S
H I O S B O O F H N R M X N L
T C G E T S C S E Y A A U W E
A H U H H R A N R J L G W A E
B S G O T F I R A E G T R R P
D S W I C L E P R L P R A M P
E E A O N T S T E K C O P A L
R P I T B E D R O O M H O E U
I O S D I A L P K L I S R R S
T R T L E N G T H O T E L D H

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7/6

Bath, Bedroom, Blanket, Bows, Cheetah, Coffee, Color, Couch, Dream, Fabric, Fashion, Flannel, Fleece, Fluffy, Gown, Hotel, Length, Light, Linen, Loose, Lounge, Luxury, Night, Pajamas, Pastel, Personalize, Plaid, Plush, Pockets, Relax, Rest, Rope, Satin, Shawl, Short, Shower, Silk, Sleep, Snuggle, Soap, Stripe, Style, Terry, Thin, Tired, Waffle, Waist, Warm, Wool, Wrap

Last Friday's Answer: Teachers

To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Bucks, Lakers look to shed rust, be healthy for playoffs



MILWAUKEE (AP)—The Milwaukee Bucks and Los Angeles Lakers have all but guaranteed themselves the top two playoff seeds and face a balancing act when the NBA returns to action.

While other teams will be fighting for a postseason berth or playoff seedings when they play the final eight regular season games in Florida, the Lakers and Bucks will be looking to shake off the rust after a 4+-month hiatus while also staying healthy.

“At least from a player’s aspect, you can expect us to go out there and play as best as we can and as hard as we can during this situation,” Bucks forward Khris Middleton said. “That’s the only thing we can control, really.”

With the league playing the remainder of the regular season and the entire playoffs at Walt Disney World as a safety precaution amid the coronavirus pandemic, owning a No. 1 seed may not matter as much as usual. But the Bucks and Lakers are virtually assured of having the top seeds in their respective conferences regardless.

Milwaukee owned the NBA’s best record at 53-12 and the Lakers were next at 49-14 when the pandemic caused a suspension of play in mid-March.

The Lakers will arrive at Disney World with a magic number of three in the race for the No. 1 seed in the Western Conference. That number could get trimmed to one on re-opening night if they beat the Los Angeles Clippers in

the second game of the July 30 doubleheader.

Milwaukee’s magic number for the East’s No. 1 seed is two. The Bucks can’t drop below the No. 2 spot in the East, no matter what happens, and they could lock up the top spot on their half of the bracket as early as Aug. 2.

The race for the NBA’s best overall record still could be in doubt at that point. But with no home-court advantage to play for in these playoffs, the only thing left to decide would be which team is assured of wearing white uniforms for Game 1 of the NBA Finals if the title series is a Bucks-Lakers matchup.

“Like we always would if this were the regular season or if these were the last eight games of the regular season, we would compete to win,” Lakers coach Frank Vogel said. “That’s how your habits are built the best. Every time we take the floor, we’re going to go out there and try to win a game.”

When teams are locked into a particular playoff seed, they often spend the final few games of the regular season resting key players to avoid the risk of injury. That won’t necessarily be the case this season after such a long hiatus.

Middleton said Friday he was “probably not able to touch a basketball for maybe two or three months” during the pandemic. Bucks guard Donte DiVincenzo said his inability to use the Bucks’ training facility for much of the hiatus caused him to focus on conditioning and said that “it kind of took me back to being



AP
In this March 06, 2020 file photo, Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James dunks during their game against the Milwaukee Bucks at Staples Center in Los Angeles, CA.

a little kid again, dribbling the ball inside, doing those little moves on the sidewalk and stuff like that.”

That means even the teams without much at stake may need to spend these last eight regular-season games trying to regain the momentum that was lost these last few months.

“I don’t expect the first game or second game or third game, guys are going to be at 100%,” Bucks forward and reigning MVP Giannis Antetokounmpo said. “Guys are going to be rusty. We’ll see a lot of balls, people throwing the ball through the stands, turnovers. You’re going to see that. But I think as we move forward and guys get more comfortable, the level of basketball is going to get better each game.”

An early top-seed clinching also could see Lakers forward LeBron James breaking his routine. Typically, once James’ team is locked into a playoff seed, he shuts it down and begins preparing for the postseason. But because of the layoff, it could be argued that James might want to get a bit more game action even after the Lakers clinch the No. 1 spot.

“Does that mean you want to play certain guys 47 minutes? Obviously, no,” Vogel said. “We’ll be intelligent with the whole process.”

The NBA and NBPA announced the news in a joint statement on Thursday. The nine positives resulted from a test of 344 players between June 24-29. The results increase the total of confirmed player cases to 25 since testing on June 23 resulted in 16 positive cases.

That number does not represent all the positive cases among NBA players since the pandemic began. Players like Rudy Gobert and Donovan Mitchell who self-identified earlier in the pandemic are not included in those numbers.

No player has self-identified since the NBA announced the new positive cases.

The NBA also announced that tests of 884 team staff members from June 23-29 have resulted in 10 positive cases.

The NBA is regularly testing players and announcing the results as the league prepares to resume play in the Disney World bubble on July 30.

A surge in COVID-19 cases nationwide and in Florida have prompted con-

9 more positive COVID-19 tests among players

cerns about the NBA bubble outside Orlando. The United States saw the biggest spike of the pandemic on Wednesday, with nearly 50,000 new cases nationwide.

Florida is one of the nation’s hot spots with cases surging after Gov. Ron DeSantis eased social distancing guidelines intended to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Florida announced more than 10,000 new cases on Thursday, increasing its total of positive COVID-19 cases to more than 169,000.

Clippers, Heat shut down facilities

The Los Angeles Clippers shut down their practice facility on Thursday after a positive COVID-19 test in the organization.

It’s not clear who tested positive or if the person infected is a player. It is somebody who is part of the Clippers’ travel plans for the NBA bubble at Disney World,

according to the report. The Clippers are scheduled to travel to Florida next week.

The Clippers are the second team to shut down facilities after the Denver Nuggets closed their practice complex on Tuesday due to a positive test in the organization.

The Miami Heat shut down their practice facility on Friday after a second player on the team tested positive for COVID-19.

The team will now not practice together again until it arrives at Walt Disney World for the league’s restart on Wednesday.

Heat forward Derrick Jones Jr. was the first player on the team to test positive for the coronavirus last week. The second player did not identify himself, however he is reportedly in quarantine. According to reports, he is still expected to participate with the team when play resumes.

The practice facility will remain open only to continue testing for players and staff members.

Mental health

Jrue Holiday expects basketball to be the easy part.

The Pelicans guard will be living in the NBA’s “bubble” when 22 teams gather near Orlando, Florida, this month to resume their suspended season.

Holiday’s wife, Lauren, a former U.S. national team soccer player, is pregnant with the couple’s second child at a time when much of society has been shut down by the coronavirus pandemic. The veteran New Orleans player might be away from home for more than a month.

Meanwhile, Memphis rookie Ja Morant expects to miss his daughter’s first birthday next month. Boston’s Gordon Hayward may leave the team when his fourth child is born

in September. And players like Washington’s Bradley Beal and Portland’s Damian Lillard wonder how intense NBA restrictions on player movement will be received.

These are but a few examples of why the NBA, its teams and the players’ union are making mental health and wellness resources available to players now and once they arrive at Disney’s Wide World of Sports complex.

“It is going to leave the guys with a lot of time on their own, and challenges with families, newborns and whatever else they have going on in their personal lives are going to be magnified because they’re going to be in confined spaces for prolonged periods of time,” said William Parham, a Loyola Marymount psychology professor and director of the National Basketball Players Association’s mental health and wellness

program. “There’s no way around it, so I would anticipate some increased anxiety, some increased tension, some increased restlessness.”

There will be no fans at Disney. There also will be restrictions on where players can go, plus rules keeping families away until at least the second round of the playoffs. The hope is to significantly limit exposure to COVID-19 inside the bubble.

Even under normal circumstances, Holiday sees family time as a cherished respite. Life at Disney will clearly complicate that.

“This is one of the mental parts about it that guys have to adjust to, where someone like me, I go home and it’s where I kind of relax,” Holiday said. “I try my best not to bring my work home with me so I can hang out with my wife, my dog, and my daughter and I can do things like that. ... I think that’s going to be a little bit of a challenge, especially after like seven to 10 days.” (NBC/AP)

Tough day for MLB: Price out, Freeman positive



NEW YORK

(AP)—Freddie Freeman tests positive for COVID-19. Masahiro Tanaka gets hit in the head by a line drive. David Price announces he won't play this season.

On this Fourth of July, even the return of baseball didn't offer much cause for celebration.

As teams prepared to start their pandemic-shortened season, sobering examples of the game's potential danger took place at camps across the country.

Major League Baseball is getting ready for a 60-game season that won't include Price, a former Cy Young Award winner who was traded from the Boston Red Sox to the Los Angeles Dodgers in February.

"After considerable thought and discussion with my family and the Dodgers, I have decided it is in the best interest of my health and my family's health for me to not play this season," the five-time All-Star tweeted Saturday.

"I will miss my teammates and will be cheering for them throughout the season and on to a World Series victory. I'm sorry I won't be playing for you this year, but look forward to representing you next year," Price said.

The 34-year-old Price said he was opting out about five hours after Atlanta manager Brian Snitker announced Freeman had tested positive along with Braves pitchers Will Smith and Touki Toussaint as well as infielder Pete Kozma. Snitker said Smith and Toussaint were asymptomatic and noted Kozma had a fever.

Freeman is "not feeling great," Snitker said.

"It will be a while before we can get him back," he said of the four-time All-Star first baseman.

It was uncertain whether Freeman would be ready for the start of the season, scheduled for July 23.

The New York Yankees said All-Star infielder DJ LeMahieu and pitcher Luis Cessa tested positive for COVID-19 before traveling to New York and were self-isolating at home. Manager Aaron Boone said LeMahieu was asymptomatic and Cessa had mild symptoms.

Kansas City catcher Salvador Pérez and Twins first baseman Miguel Sanó also tested positive.

Due to concerns about medical privacy laws, MLB isn't making a practice of disclosing which players test positive. For example, Baltimore Orioles manager Brandon Hyde said the team doesn't intend to reveal to the general public if anyone has tested positive. The Pittsburgh Pirates acknowl-



edged there were positive tests within the organization but didn't get into specifics.

In the Braves' case, the four players who tested positive permitted Snitker to reveal their names. It's a move he applauded.

"For me, I think it's good in the industry and society, to know that this is a real deal," Snitker said. "This virus is real. It's nothing to mess with."

Snitker said Braves first base coach Eric Young Sr. already has opted out due to COVID-19 concerns.

Houston's Dusty Baker, who at 71 is the oldest MLB manager, added that "I admire Freddie Freeman and his group for coming out saying what the problem is. And hopefully this can get through to other people, other young people."

Indeed, the news surround-

ing Freeman offered a reminder to players across the league that anyone is potentially susceptible. Freeman joins Colorado Rockies outfielder Charlie Blackmon as four-time All-Stars who have tested positive.

"It doesn't matter—age, race, ethnicity, religion," Milwaukee Brewers star Ryan Braun said. "Nobody is immune from this thing. I think there are constant reminders when you see the

amount of athletes who have tested positive, the amount of big-name athletes who have tested positive and you hear some of their stories."

San Francisco Giants catcher Buster Posey says he hasn't ruled out this season, assuming the games are actually played. The six-time All-Star isn't yet convinced there will even be a season.

"The way I would project it

AP
In this March 2, 2020 file photo, Los Angeles Dodgers starting pitcher David Price throws against the Cincinnati Reds during the first inning of a spring training baseball game in Good-year, Ariz.

is I wouldn't be surprised by anything at this point," Posey said. "I wouldn't be surprised if we played 60 games with no hiccup and I wouldn't be surprised if we didn't play a game at all and I wouldn't be surprised if we played half the games. That's just the variability of this to me."

"I just really think there's no way we can give a hard line answer one way or another to what this is going to look like a week from now much less two months from now," he said.

Posey's comments came one day after three-time AL MVP Mike Trout of the Los Angeles Angels said he still doesn't "feel that comfortable" about playing this season with his wife expecting their first child in August. Trout said he is planning to play at this point but that much would depend on how he feels the next couple of weeks.

Texas Rangers outfielder Nick Solak said that "after getting tested, just waiting for the results, there's a level of anxiety." He acknowledged that anxiety might subside as the season wears on and players get more accustomed to going through the tests.

The most frightening scene of the day didn't involve the coronavirus at all.

Tanaka hurt

During the Yankees' first official summer camp workout, Tanaka got hit in the head by Giancarlo Stanton's live drive. Tanaka immediately collapsed and stayed down for a few minutes before sitting up and eventually walking off.

The Yankees said in a statement that Tanaka was responsive and walking under his own power. He was sent to New York-Presbyterian Hospital for further evaluation.

That was the scariest moment of baseball's bizarre and eerie return to the Bronx.

Before they even began their first official workout, Yankees players were startled mid-stretch around when someone set off a firework just outside the ballpark that echoed throughout the empty stadium. Similar bangs went off intermittently throughout the workout.

About 45 minutes after Tanaka was hit, a deafening siren went off in Yankee Stadium, drowning out music playing through the PA system for about 30 seconds. Emergency lights flashed around the stadium for about five minutes, as well.

Woods sits out again, passes up on Workday Open

OHIO—Seven of the Top 15 players in the world are set to tee it up next week at the Workday Charity Open, the first of back-to-back PGA Tour events at Muirfield Village in Dublin.

Tiger Woods is not among them.

Woods, currently 14th in the Official World Golf Ranking, hasn't made a start on Tour since the Genesis Invitational in mid-February, but he did participate in The Match: Champions for Charity in May and recently was shown stripping shots in a GolfTV social post.

Though Woods has yet to officially announce his upcoming schedule, many expect him to return to competition at the Memorial Tournament, an event that

Woods has won five times. The Memorial is slated for the week after the Workday event, which replaced the canceled John Deere Classic on the schedule.

Even without Woods, plenty of other big names committed by the 5pm ET deadline Friday, including world No. 2 Jon Rahm, No. 4 Justin Thomas and No. 5 Brooks Koepka, who withdrew from last week's Travelers Championship after his caddie, Ricky Elliott, was diagnosed with COVID-19.

"I haven't tested positive for COVID-19, but as I've said all along, I'm taking this very seriously," Koepka said last week in a statement. "I don't want to do anything that might jeopardize the health of

any player in the field or his ability to compete. The right thing to do right now is get home, support Ricky and feel confident that I'm doing what I can do protecting my fellow

Tour members, my PGA Tour friends and everyone associated with the Travelers Championship this week."

Also in the Workday field are Xander Schauffele, Patrick Cantlay, Patrick Reed, Justin Rose, Phil Mickelson, Jordan Spieth and Rickie Fowler.

Professional golfers who compete on the PGA Tour's international tours received good news last weekend

The Tour confirmed that it will conduct a series of eight tournaments, beginning in August, in order to provide



NFL players union votes to cancel preseason



NEW YORK
(A P) — The NFL plans to consider the NFL Players Association's

recommendation to cancel the preseason though it prefers to cut the schedule in half, a person familiar with the discussions told The Associated Press on Saturday night.

The league decided Wednesday to cut its preseason from four games to two and push back the start of exhibition play so teams have more time to train because the coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of offseason practices, a person with knowledge of the decision told the AP.

But the union's board of player representatives voted Thursday to ask the league to cancel the entire preseason schedule, according to two people who were part of that conversation.

According to the collective bargaining agreement, the NFL can impose up to four preseason games per team this season and up to three when the regular season goes to 17 games in 2021. The teams that play in the annual Hall of Fame game may play an extra game. That game between the Cowboys and Steelers scheduled for Aug. 6 already was canceled.

The four people spoke on condition of anonymity because the league and the union haven't reached an agreement.

The pandemic forced teams to conduct their entire offseason programs via videoconference. So, teams will be gathering together for the first



In this Sept. 15, 2019 file photo, Cleveland Browns wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. (13) makes a one-handed catch for a first down deep in New York Jets territory. AP

time when training camps open this month.

Meanwhile, agent Drew Rosenhaus has asked the Cleveland Browns to trade tight end and former first-round draft pick David Njoku, a person familiar with the request told The Associated Press.

Rosenhaus wants his client out of Cleveland, but the Browns, who picked up the fifth-year contract option on Njoku in April, have no plans to move him, said the person who spoke on condition of anonymity because the team is not publicly commenting on the situation.

Rosenhaus told ESPN that "it is in David's best interest to

find a new team at this time." He did not respond to a message from the AP seeking further comment.

Njoku was selected with the No. 29 overall pick in 2017. He caught 88 passes for 1,025 yards and scored eight touchdowns in his first two seasons. However, he broke his wrist in Week 2 last season against the New York Jets, underwent surgery and played in just four games.

His future in Cleveland came into question when the Browns signed two-time Pro Bowler Austin Hooper in free agency, and again after the club drafted Harrison Bryant, the John Mackey Award winner in

college last season from Florida Atlantic, in the fourth round.

However, both general manager Andrew Berry and first-year coach Kevin Stefanski have consistently said during the offseason that they believe Njoku can contribute for the Browns.

"We still have a ton of belief in David," Berry said after the draft in April. "He's very talented. Obviously, he was not on the field much last year, but he's a guy with outstanding physical tools, he has proven NFL production and we still think the future is very bright with him here."

"David has always been and continues to be in our plans, and

we're going to continue to add competition all across the roster."

Stefanski used formations with multiple tight ends while serving as Minnesota's offensive coordinator and intends to run a similar system in Cleveland.

Last season, Rosenhaus was able to work a trade to get disgruntled running back Duke Johnson out of Cleveland. He was dealt to Houston.

In Green Bay, the Packers are telling fans to prepare to wear a mask if they're able to see a game at Lambeau Field at all this season.

In a message from Packers President/CEO Mark Murphy, season ticket holders were told

that the team is optimistic fans will be able to attend games this year, although even that's not a sure thing.

"At this time, the team is preparing to have fans in attendance with new policies and safety measures to allow for appropriate social distancing, which will require the stadium's seating capacity to be significantly reduced," the team's statement said. "Face coverings also will be required, and other necessary precautions will be in place. As a result, the special experience to which fans are accustomed at Lambeau Field will look and feel very different."

3-PHASE

From Page 20

are allowed. Additionally, we must follow US Tri and International Triathlon Union guidelines and also the rules from our local and federal governments," Castro said.

Recently, some TRAC members joined the Go The Distance Challenge, a virtual event Urban Fitness Project Team from Guam organized with participants given a month (from July 1 to 31) to complete one of the four races—50-mile walk, 30-mile swim, 300-mile bike, and 100-mile run or combined three ("Ultimate Challenge").

Castro added that TRAC is planning to hold an off-road duathlon (in-person race) in August, while the Tagaman Triathlon is still in the 2020 calendar, but all events will depend on the development of the COVID-19 pandemic. The CNMI is now on "Blue" under the Community Vulnerability Level or just one step away from the desired level ("Green"), easing restrictions

on mass gathering (a maximum of 25 persons is allowed, including sports-related activities, as long as social distancing protocol is practiced).

"Finding the right schedule for the Tagaman is a challenge," the TRAC official added.

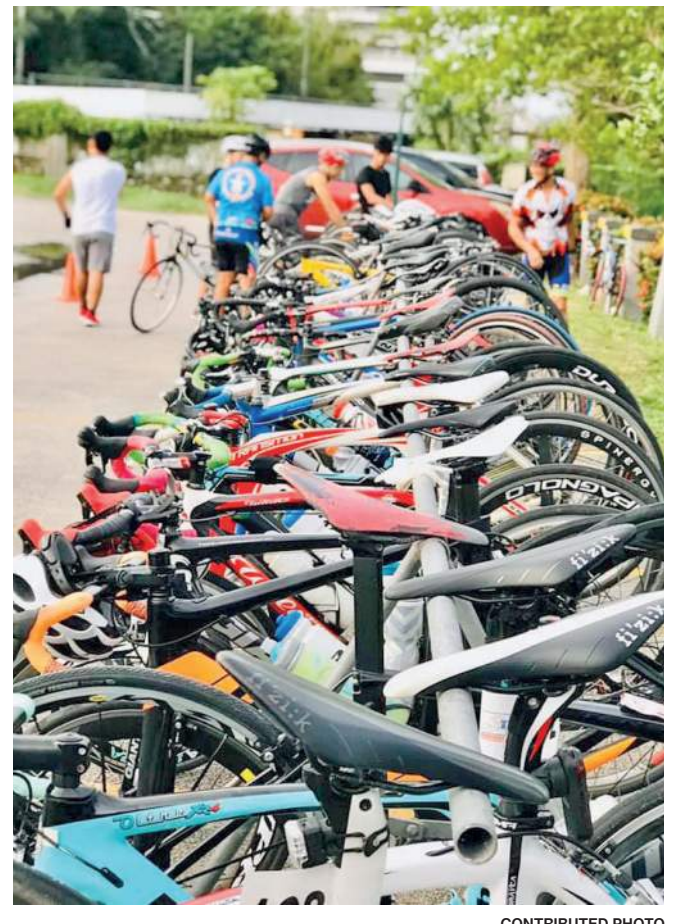
Tagaman was originally set for March 21, but had to be suspended, as a week before the event, the CNMI government set restrictions on gathering of big crowds, including sports competitions. More than 100 had registered for Western Pacific's longest-running triathlon event and nearly half of them are from off-island.

Besides the three-phase guidelines, TRAC will also refer to USA Tri's other recommendations once it resumes actual races in the CNMI.

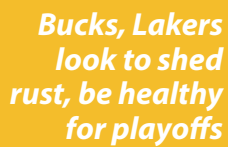
These include personal health evaluations/monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, observing good personal hygiene, limiting contact/interaction among athletes, volunteers, and race officials, and encouraging athletes not to share equipment and bring their own hydration kit.



Swimmer Jinnosuke Suzuki heads to the swim-bike transition area of the 2017 Tagaman Triathlon at Kilili Beach. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Bikes are lined up during a duathlon race organized by Triathlon Association of the CNMI at Paupau Beach before COVID-19 struck the islands. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



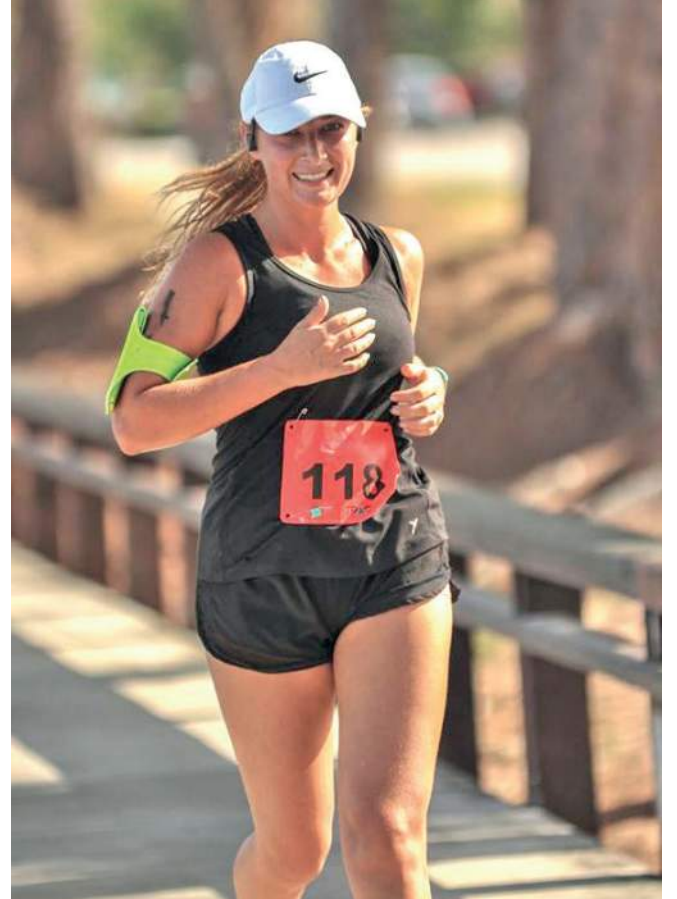
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***Tough day
for MLB: Price
out, Freeman
positive***

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3-phase plan for triathlon restart



In this file photo, from left, Ketson “Jack” Kabiriel, Heather Taylor, and Alyona Gersonde compete in one of the Tagaman Triathlon races.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Triathlon Association of the CNMI is adapting the USA Triathlon's Return to Racing Guidelines to ensure the safety of its members and the community at this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidelines have three phases with Phase 1 involving holding virtual races and allowing personal training sessions, but will still be strictly following safety rules set by authorities, such as social distancing.



For Phase 2, in-person racing is permitted, but restrictions on numbers of participants will be applied along with the government-set protocols. Phase 3 is where restrictions are eased and things are starting to get back to normal with in-person racing allowed and there are no limits on the size

of the event. However, there are moderate restrictions plus health and safety practices before and during races.

TRAC secretary general Ricky Castro said that at this time, the organization is at Phase 1.

"For now, only virtual races

See 3-PHASE on Page 19

The case for lifting heavy and dealing with weight fluctuations

When you do a search on anything pertaining to exercise and nutrition, there's a whole mess of nonsense that pops up it's almost impossible to unpack and discern which is relevant and which is questionable.

Since I've been involved in this fitness thingamajig, I've lost count on how many times I've banged my head against a wall over the horrendous things being spewed. While it's universally acknowledged there is no best approach, there's certainly a dumb way.

You've seen your friends go through it. You've seen it happen to a few of your colleagues. If you want to avoid cyclical periods of losing weight and gaining it all back, seek consultation from someone who's legitimately qualified.

Q: What's the purpose of lifting max loads? I really don't get why you have to lift that much. Your risk of injury goes up.

A: That's a valid argument. Unless you're a competitive lifter, there's actually very little benefit for you to be lifting max loads or doing one-rep lifts. It's mostly vanity work, in my opinion. On the flip side, I will say that when done periodically, training atop or as close to your threshold is a good confidence booster. If you have no desire to lift heavy, you can rest easy knowing you can still make gains so long as you safely train to momentary muscle failure on certain exercises. After all, lifting weights isn't suppose to tickle.

Q: So I stepped on the scale today and my weight went up

Ask DRE:

By DRE DELOS SANTOS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Dre Delos Santos writes about fitness and nutrition for Saipan Tribune and TAGA Sports. He is a personal trainer at Gold's Gym. He is featured on fitness sites such as Weight Watchers, T-Nation, and STACK.



a bit. Honestly, I'm freaking out. What's going on?

A: First of all, it's not a setback. Now I understand the temptation to do something different to get things moving again. However, to flip the script when the scale goes up unexpectedly is ill-advised. We operate under the assumption that progress should occur linearly. In reality, day-to-day fluctuations are normal, so it's critically

important to be objective and look at it for what it really is, information. Poor sleep, water, salt, and carbohydrate intake are all factors that can influence fluctuations in your weight. But it is not indicative of gaining fat. It's worth repeating that that only becomes a fact if you've been eating at a surplus over a period of time. Two things that are also overlooked are stress and hormonal fluctuations.

Tennis coaching webinar set

The International Tennis Federation and ITF Academy will be hosting a coaching webinar on July 8 and 9 in their bid to continue the coaches' professional development amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The webinar is for Pacific Oceania-member nations with ITF Development Officer (Pacific Oceania) Gary Purcell and ITF Participation and Coaching head Miguel Crespo conducting the education and certification course.

The session for CNMI, Australia, Guam, and PNG is set for 6pm (4am Saipan time) on July 9. For the 7pm session on the same day, it will be the turn of coaches from Vanuatu and the Federated States of Micronesia, while Fiji, New Zealand, and Kiribati will be together in the 8pm slot, and

Cook Islands and Tahiti coaches will kick off the course, as their session are slated for July 8 at 10pm.

The webinar will discuss information about the ITF Academy, it's coaches education program, and the current challenges and opportunities for coaches in the region. There will also be a question and answer portion in the session and interested participants are encouraged to email Purcell (garypurcell@itftennis.com) their questions before July 7.

Registration for the seminar is required and can be done by following the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8452812345>. (Saipan Tribune)

